JULY 2013 | **#140** | £4 / €7 / $13

develop

GAME DESIGN | CODING | ART | SOUND | BUSINESS

Bugs. Beware.

Testronic
Our assurance is your guarantee

www.testroniclabs.com

Our assurance is your guarantee

Testronic is a leading global provider of Quality Assurance services for the games and interactive entertainment industries. Operating from facilities in London, Belgium, USA, Poland and Japan; Testronic has served as a trusted partner to a portfolio of leading clients for over 15 years.

QA Localisation

Consistent representation of a game's identity is key to a brand's successful penetration into any market. Testronic works with all major platforms testing social, MMO and digitally distributed games, inspecting every aspect of a project to ensure your game plays as you intended, anywhere you intended.

User Experience

With User Experience (UX) research, Testronic focuses on how players interact with a game, emphasising user goals and motivations, helping to solve issues that deter players from becoming loyal customers and long-term subscribers, giving your game the appeal you need.

Compatibility

Testronic's PC Compatibility Lab was devised with one idea in mind - to ensure your game will work on any PC on the planet. It is arguably the best of its kind in the world, with approximately 2000 pieces of equipment in the inventory. Testronic can test your game on any configuration to ensure it plays on any machine you want.

Functionality

As an independent test centre, Testronic guarantees a professional and objective view of your game, helping to clearly define your specific priorities and requirements. This is why following an evaluation of reference builds and design documents, each title receives a bespoke approach and test plan incorporating both Scripted and Exploratory Testing.

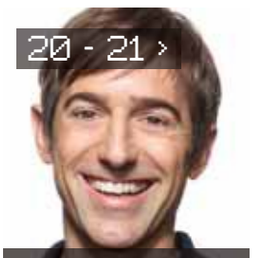
Compliance

Our skilled in-house teams are fully equipped with the Debug kits and toolsets for pre-certification testing, using our proprietary approach and checklists for all platforms for Nintendo®, Sony® and Microsoft®. Testronic has the experience and knowledge to help your submission pass the very first time.

develop
ISSUE 140 JULY 2013

16 - 19 ›

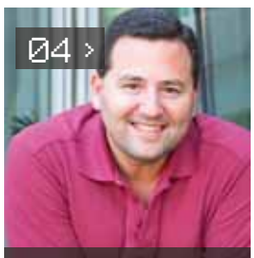
SPILLING THEIR GUTS
The Surgeon Simulator team tell their story of near-overnight success


20 - 21 ›

PINCUS Q&A
Zynga interviewed

53 - 56 ›

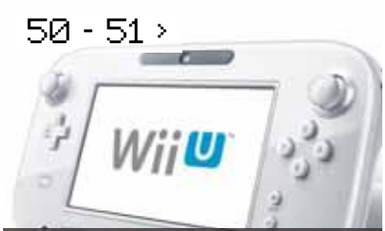
DATA'S DAY
Analytics uncovered


04 ›

EPIC LEGENDS
Award winners news

23 - 27 ›

DEVELOP CONFERENCE GUIDE
An essential guide to sessions, the expo, the networking and our own awards


50 - 51 ›

WEB FRAMEWORK
Inside Nintendo's game dev tech

REGULARS

Opinion and analysis P12
Key Release P60
Heard About P63
Directory – Recruitment P68
Directory – Spotlights P72
FAQ P78

EDITORIAL

GETTING PHYSICAL

WE ALL KNOW that digital isn't just the future of games; it's the present. Mobile, browser, DLC, apps; today these are terms that even the most casual consumer can be presumed to understand.

Even a festishist of dated physical formats like myself who buys music on vinyl and old games on dusty game cartridges can see it. Brick and mortar stores close, business models favour digital and next-gen consoles have no disc drives.

I hope you spotted my intentional mistake there. Obviously, consoles still support physical formats, so discs clearly matter to somebody. I completely agree with the idea that digital is beyond significant as it stands, and it is the future of the industry, but it seems many consumers are still reluctant to relinquish their grip on the tangiable.

Consider the uproar about Microsoft's policies around online check-in and pre-owned limitations with the Xbox One (and try and forget for just a moment the self-publishing rules and emphasis on TV). Understandably, few were happy with the decisions, but equally those policies could be intepreted as a forward-thinking experiment by Microsoft in making the console's arguably dated form appliable to the digital present.

But that didn't matter. Consumers wanted what they already knew. They demanded freedom from the shackles of online restrictions. They wanted discs they could lend and offline gaming. They made a racket, and Microsoft responded, instigating a policy U-turn that pointed the company squarely at its physical past.

And so it is that a little like those vinyl records that are this year enjoying a towering peak in sales and production, physical formats persist. They won't be around forever, but a demise seems distant today.

Will Freeman
will.freeman@intentmedia.co.uk

ALSO INSIDE › NETHERLANDS REGION FOCUS • IMMIGRATION LAW • NOKIA • LOCALISATION

BLITZ TECH
BlitzTech. By developers, for developers
BlitzTech.com
LOOKING TO THE FUTURE
Fully-featured console and browser development solution
Programmers wanted

Tim Sweeney and Mark Rein getting Legend honour

Epic Games' CEO and vice president set for prestigious recognition at 2013 Develop Industry Excellence Awards

by Will Freeman

EPIC GAMES' TIM Sweeney and Mark Rein will be inducted into the games development hall of fame at the coming Develop Industry Excellence Awards.

At a ceremony on July 10th at the Brighton Hilton Metropole, the pair will each receive the Development Legend award, joining an elite few who have been handed the honour.

This is the first time the award will be presented to figures from the international games development scene. Previous recipients are British-born respected games industry leaders including Peter Molyneux, David Braben, Charles Cecil, Phil Harrison, Ian Livingstone, and last year's Legend David Perry.

The award acknowledges the pair's success leading Epic Games in 22 years of business both as a developer and creator of major franchises, and most importantly as a technology pioneer with the widely-used Unreal Engine. Sweeney (*above left*) is CEO and founder of Epic Games, Rein (*right*) is vice president.

AT THE CEREMONY

The award will be presented as part of the Develop Industry Excellence Awards, an event hosted by *Develop* and its publisher Intent Media.

"As this current generation of games consoles closes and as interactive content continues to spread across mobile, web and away from the TV, it is the right time to present our prestigious Legend honour to those who have helped define these changes," said Michael French, editor-in-chief of *Develop*. "The Unreal Engine has supported games of all sizes from around the world, from modern blockbusters to mobile innovations.

> ***"It is truly a special honour for me to be able to accept this recognition, along with Tim Sweeney, on behalf of Epic."***
>
> Mark Rein, Epic Games

"Epic Games' leaders Tim and Mark have helped this company excel in terms of coding genius and commercial smarts, both as a partner to many in the business and an impressive studio network in its own right. *Develop* looks forward to presenting this honour to Tim and Mark on July 10th."

"I owe much gratitude to *Develop* and to all of the gamers and developers who have supported Epic Games, and Mark and I personally, throughout our company's 22-year history. This is awesome," added Sweeney.

"I've always been a huge fan and supporter of the British game industry so it is truly a special honour for me to be able to accept this recognition, along with Tim Sweeney, on behalf of everyone at Epic who has worked tirelessly over the years to delight British gaming enthusiasts and to empower British game developers with the Unreal Engine," stated Rein. "We look forward to continuing to do this and we thank you sincerely for this kind reward."

AMONG PIERS

The only peer-voted awards for the UK and European game industry, the Develop Awards are this year taking place on July 10th at the Brighton Metropole hotel, just one week away.

At the time of writing a limited number of places to attend the event remained. To check last-minute availability and to book a place, contact **Kathryn.Humphrey@intentmedia.co.uk** or call 01992 535 646 as soon as possible.

Event partners include Platinum Partners Crytek, Deep Silver and Microsoft, Gold Partners Testronic, Amiqus, UKIE, Perforce Software, Sumo Digital and Pitbull Studio, Drinks Reception Partner NaturalMotion Games, Table Gift Partner OPM Recruitment, Event Partners Nova Scotia Business Inc and Playmob, and Award Partner ARM.

www.developawards.com ■

develop iPad | Videos are available within the iPad Edition of **Develop** on iTunes and the Browser-based Digital Edition, which can be accessed at **develop-online.net**

THIS MONTH: Inside Surgeon Simulator **Hansoft's GIT integration** Rearming Expendable for Shield

Sponsored by Microsoft

DICE details battleplan for new LA studio

European developer rolls into the US ● GM discusses team-building plans and the new role at the satellite studio

by Craig Chapple

SWEDISH BATTLEFIELD developer EA DICE has detailed the plans for its new development studio in Los Angeles, USA.

Despite widespread restructuring taking place at publishing giant Electronic Arts, DICE has an ambitious development slate including *Battlefield 4*, *Mirror's Edge 2* and a *Star Wars: Battlefront* revival, and has managed to expand into another country with a full new studio.

Currently housing 40 staff, with plans to reached up to 60 by the end of the year, the developer is already up and running and is currently working on *Battlefield 4* alongside the Stockholm office.

TO INFINITY AND BEYOND

Speaking to *Develop*, DICE LA general manager Fredrik Loving (*left*) said the company was attracted to the US city due to its strong and vibrant talent pool. It's a location that also houses one of the studio's biggest rivals, *Call of Duty* developer Infinity Ward.

But as well as the amount of talent on offer in the city, Loving says another interesting factor in the move was the time difference.

"I love the fact we have nine hours in between us," he said. "That for me is very interesting when it comes to working in the online space. We get to do almost two shifts, with one location in Stockholm and one in Los Angeles. So it opens up a lot of very interesting doors when it comes to online gaming and development."

He added that despite being based on different continents, however, the studio will very much carry over the established creative culture of the DICE team, and will essentially act as a second floor to the Stockholm studio.

"I don't see a difference between Stockholm and Los Angeles," he said. "We're working on the same games and the same products, we are DICE."

The developer is currently based out of EALA's offices, where the now defunct Medal of Honor studio formely took the space. But despite being closed down after the first-person shooter IP was shelved, many of the best developers from the studio have been snapped up by DICE LA.

But Loving is keen to find a brand new office for DICE LA, and is currently on the lookout for a new base of operations.

"We're actually looking for a new office right now," he said. "At the moment we're based in EA Los Angeles and that's our interim solution while looking for a new office space here in Los Angeles." ■

Testronic debuts new brand identity

Respected QA outfit switches its logo and branding to better define the range of services it offers the creative sectors

by Will Freeman

QUALITY ASSURANCE, COMPLIANCE and localisation specialist Testronic has reworked its brand identity to more clearly define the range of services it offers.

The change is focused around a new logo designed to 'communicate the quality and integrity of the company's business lines and services', with four colour coded ticks denoting the outfit's Games, Film and TV, Hardware and Software divisions.

"The new branding is much simpler, with our four coloured ticks for our four very clearly defined business lines," confirmed Becky Walker (*right*), Testronic's director of games business development, speaking to *Develop*. "The simplicity enables us to communicate and distinguish between the business lines for our marketing, internal communications and for our customer's understanding."

"This is an exciting time in Testronic's history," added Mike McGarvey, Testronic CEO, in a statement to the press. "We are restructuring for further growth and the new brand development is an important part of this. It will allow us to clearly communicate the range of services that Testronic offers and assist internal communication across our business lines."

GAME FOR CHANGE

The brand reworking comes as Testronic has enjoyed a particularly successful period, with games production proving an important part of the company's overall model.

Testronic
Our assurance is your guarantee

"Games is very important for Testronic, as is our work with film and TV, software and Digital TV," stated Walker. "Many of the divisions have grown and our games management team is now made up of many industry veterans. We've made a huge investment in not just mobile hardware handsets, but also our software teams are putting a lot of effort into our technology behind our mobile testing. We've also put a lot into intelligence compatibility programs for mobile."

The new logo is accompanied by the supporting strapline 'Our assurance is your guarantee,' pitched as 'a positive commitment to the customer'.

Testronic is currently increasing the volume of next generation games work it embraces, and while the nature of the team's work means that they must keep their cards close to their chests in terms of exact project details, Walker highlighted how key to the business' future platforms like the PlayStation 4 and Xbox One will be.

"The next generation of consoles are important to us and we're hugely excited about them," she said. "We're already in contact with the hardware manufacturers, developers and publishers talking about projects and hardware. At the same time we've also picked up a lot of mobile testing business, working with the social games market and MMO titles as well."

www.testroniclabs.com ■

Playmob calls on developers to

Charitable collaboration outfit encourages developers of every kind to embrace Peace One Day with its games initiative

Playdemic's Village Life (above) will include campaigns that are designed to have a charitable impact via Playmob's platform

by Will Freeman

CHARITY PLATFORM PROVIDER and former developer Playmob has called on games makers to consider their titles for supporting the global Peace One Day initiative.

Peace One Day is a not-for-profit charity body that organises the September 21st event of the same name, which strives to promote and install world peace through a coordinated effort on a global scale. The initiative sees involvement from those in fields such as education, music, business, film, sport, dance, art and, for the first time this year, games.

"Peace One Day is a global UN-backed day in September, and it's basically about promoting peace," confirmed Jude Ower, CEO of Playmob, speaking with *Develop*. "Last year it got in front of about 280 million people, and this year it hopes to reach about 600 million people. There's a whole bunch of activity that goes on around it like a 24 hour live-streamed Youtube concert, there's loads of celebrity involvement, and lots of corporate activity related to it."

As part of that drive, Playmob has set up its own element named Peace Games in conjunction with Peace One Day's organisers. Playmob is calling on developers to run campaigns as part of the build up the September event, to promote peace though video games.

"When we looked at Peace One Day last year and we got talking with Jeremy Gilley who founded the initiative, we were totally shocked that no games developers had got involved. It was especially surprising considering the opportunity for developers, and the fact that involvement is a great news story of the entire industry."

> ***"I do feel that there's a game for every charity and vice versa. And there's still time for developers to get involved, certainly."***
>
> Jude Ower, Playmob

CHARITISATION

London outfit Playmob provides a platform for partnering developers with charities, with a view to promoting each philanthropic body's cause, raising cash and extending the reach of a given game.

And according to Ower, almost any video game, even long past launch, has the potential to be 'charitised'.

"Making a game charitable is fairly applicable to all games," she stated. "I think the only thing is that working with some of the really big global charities, some of them are a lot more wary about what games they might be placed in. But a lot of charities are so focused on raising money, they are open minded, and understand that a game with violent themes doesn't mean it's played by violent players or made by violent people."

Playmob's platform includes an API that tracks in-game events, be they a transaction or an action, such as downloading an item, and converts those events into an impact on good causes. And, says Ower, there's already ample numbers of games, and in-game items that happen to be perfect for numerous charities.

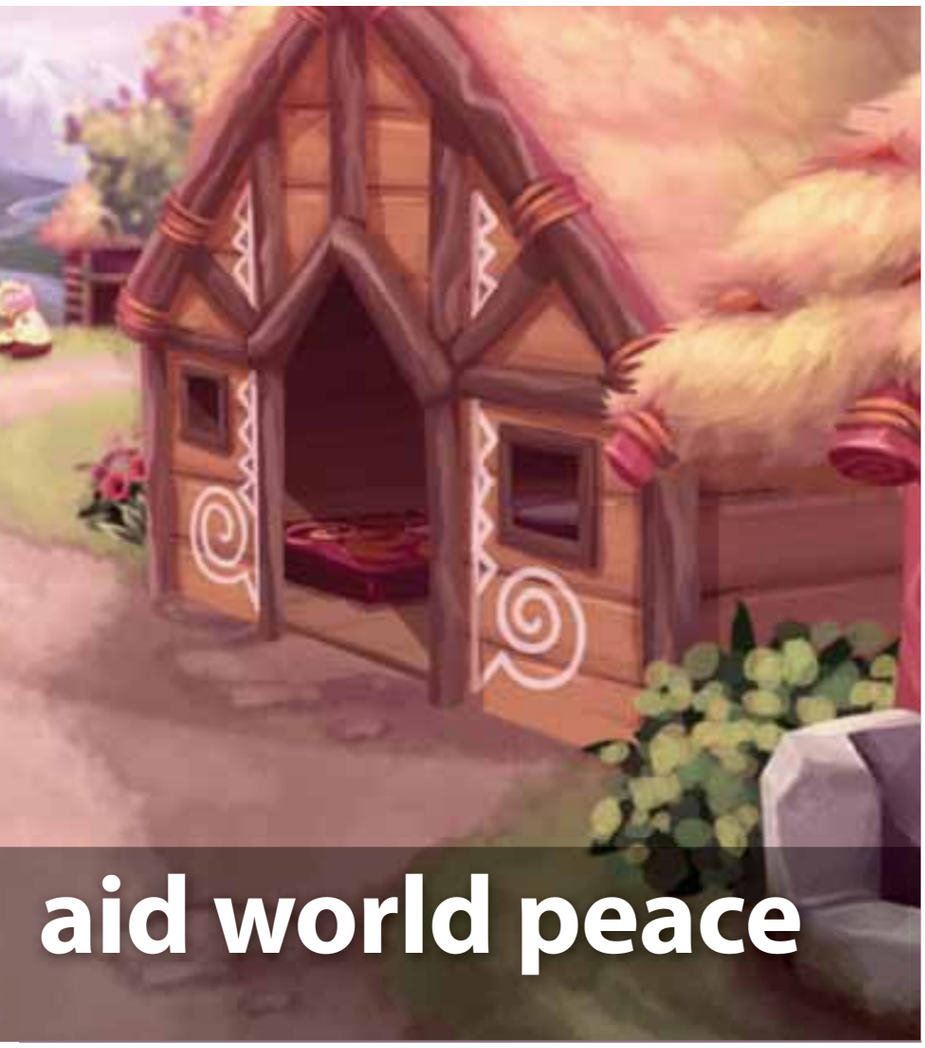
"I do feel that there's a game for every charity and vice versa," she said.

Developer's interested in getting involved in Peace Games need to act fast.

"There's still time for developers to get involved, certainly," confirmed Ower. "Ideally, July is the perfect time to make clear they want to be part of it. They can pick a specific project under Peace One Day, so they could support a charity such as an educational, food or health-related project. Then it would be a case of doing the integration and picking the dates for the run up to Peace One Day this September."

And according to Ower, there is, beyond the all-important matter of the pursuit of world peace and raising money for charity, plenty of other reasons that games studios should consider letting their games support such a drive.

"It's about increasing engagement with your player base, which is something all developers these days are trying to do," Ower explained. "There's a tonne of tools out there that are focused on acquisition of new



aid world peace

players, but then how do you monetise them? That's about engaging with your player-base, and by introducing a charity element, you're more likely to get people spending money, whether they're new spenders or just spending more.

WHO SHARES WINS

Ower is also sure developers can increase the lifetime value of their games, get users playing for longer, and sharing their experiences more readily.

"Essentially what we're doing is mirroring what's happening offline as well, with physical product and cause marketing. We've pulled together stats that show that, for example, 92 per cent of mothers and 85 per cent of 'millennials' would 'love' to buy a product of which a portion of the sales goes to support a cause or social issue. The same percentage would also switch to brands that use cause marketing."

Ower points out that with physical product, consumers are increasingly aware of supply chains, business ethics and issues like wages and working conditions in distant countries; evident through the popularity of organised social movements like Fair Trade. And, says the CEO, the same concerns and scrutiny are now directed at digital products.

"Charity involvement can make your product stand up in that way," said Ower. "Furthermore, it's all about brand thinking. If you provide a game that has charity elements it's also going to make a player feel good, and that's important. The same psychology around giving to charity being rewarding can apply to what makes your game is rewarding. And, most importantly, it raises money for charity that's really needed."

A number of games developers are already committed to Peace Games with new and already available titles. F84 Games' *Survival Run with Bear Grylls* on iOS and Android lets players purchase an IAP boat that will give an African or Indian family water for ten years, in conjunction with Global Angels. Meanwhile Playrise Digital's new title *Baby Nom Nom* is supporting SOS Children by sharing a percentage of download sales with the charity, and Playdemic is launching campaigns in *Village Life*, that will encourage players to share game actions that have a charitable impact.

And if Peace Games is too soon for some studios, Ower is confident there will be numerous other opportunities to work with charities in the future.

"Peace Games is a really great showcase of what Playmob, developers and charities can do together, but we've also got a whole series of other events happening throughout the year, so every single month there's various global events like Earth Hour, World Hunger Day and World Water Day, and far smaller and even comedy-based charity days. There's always ways games developers can help charities."

Those interested in involvement can find out more at **www.playmob.com**. ■

WHAT IS PLAYMOB?

Playmob CEO Hude Ower

PLAYMOB IS A studio, a platform, and perhaps just as much a way of thinking about linking games and charity.

The London studio itself started out as a relatively conventional development company. It began making games some five years ago, pulling on CEO Jude Ower's experience crafting titles focused on training, education and social impact. Work with Shell, IBM and even The Whiteouse came in, but Ower longed for more.

"It was a business model that was growing sustainably, but it wasn't really high impact enough for me," she explains. "I think the big changing point for the studio was when charities started getting in touch and asking us to build games to teach consumers about their organisation while raising money at the same time."

That was three years ago. A year later Playmob decided to pivot its entire business model to become a platform company. Around the same time Zynga had done its first campaign to raise money for Haiti following the earthquake. It raised $1.5 million in five days, and Ower was convinced there was potential for building a framework that would connect developers with charities. So she and her team did just that.

"Our platform enables games players to support the causes they care about through their favourite games, so it's really about a whole new level of player engagement," explains Ower. And it offers developers a way to get players to spend more money, it offers an increase in the life time value of a player, and a way to make content more interesting in terms of players sharing their content."

The way it does that is by offering studios a way of getting a charity campaign up and running, handling partnering with organisations, making the likes of IAP applicable to fundraising, and handling the notoriously intricate legal and administrative process charities must today undertake. Studios take out a contract with Playmob, which then takes out a contract itself with the partner charity. The system claims to be applicable almost globally, and allows the developer to pass through the potential minefield that is charity law with relative ease.

"There's a minimal impact on the game itself, and we knew that was important from our time making games ourselves," continues Ower. "Simply, the way our tools work is just one line of code needs implementing into an item for sale in a game. It's really very easy. Essentially it's a really low impact, light integration, and it's a RESTful API, which attaches to the item that is sold so we can track transparently how many items are sold and how much money has been raised."

The process can be implemented at the launch of a new game, or even post launch, which should make Playmob's offering all the more appealing to philanthropically minded developers.

Sponsored by
DEEP SILVER

DEVELOP DIARY

Your complete games development event calendar for the months ahead

GDC EUROPE 2013
August 19th to 21st
Cologne, Germany
www.gdceurope.com

This year's GDC Europe has seen a record number of talk submissions, with more than 275 talks – a 25 per cent rise on last year's total. Sessions cover the gamut of the latest triple-A productions, such as *Remember Me* and *Assassin's Creed III*, as well as some talks on the plethora of new hardware and how to approach the next generation. Taking place alongside Gamescom once more, expect more details on Sony and Microsoft's systems and an expo hall packed with visitors.

JULY 2013

DEVELOP CONFERENCE 2013
July 9th to 11th
Brighton, UK
www.developconference.com

DEVELOP AWARDS 2013
July 10th
Brighton, UK
www.developawards.com

SIGGRAPH 2013
July 21st to 25th
Anaheim, USA
s2013.siggraph.org

CHINAJOY 2013
July 25th to 28th
Shanghai, China
en.chinajoy.net

CASUAL CONNECT USA 2013
July 30th to August 1st
San Francisco, USA
usa.casualconnect.org

AUGUST 2013

DARE PROTOPLAY 2013
August 8th to 11th
Dundee, UK
www.dareprotoplay.com

GDC EUROPE 2013
August 19th to 21st
Cologne, Germany
www.gdceurope.com

SERIOUS PLAY CONFERENCE 2013
August 20th to 22nd
Redmond, USA
www.seriousplayconference.com

GAMESCOM 2013
August 21st to 25th
Cologne, Germany
www.gamescom-cologne.com

UNITE 2013
August 28th to 30th
Vancouver, Canada
www.unity3d.com/unite

SEPTEMBER 2013

GDC CHINA 2013
September 15th to 17th
Shanghai, China
www.gdcchina.com

DEVELOP QUIZ
September 18th
London, UK
www.develop-online.net/event

TOKYO GAME SHOW 2013
September 19th to 22nd
Tokyo, Japan
tgs.cesa.or.jp/english

DICE EUROPE 2013
September 24th to 26th
London, UK
http://bit.ly/14l3109

FUTUREFEST 2013
September 28th to 29th
London, UK
www.futurefest.org

THE MONTH AHEAD

A look at what July has in store for the industry and beyond

JULY 9TH
Develop Conference 2013.
Brighton, beaches and business at the UK's premier games development get-together.

JULY 12TH
Monsters University.
It's back to uni with Sulley and Mike in this follow-up to one of Pixar's most beloved films.

JULY 21ST
SIGGRAPH 2013.
The next generation of tools and tech exposed at this annual exhibition for digital creators.

JULY 26TH
The Wolverine.
Hugh Jackman, and his ample facial hair, reprise Marvel's iconic hero in this reinvention.

JULY 10TH
Develop Awards 2013.
We recognise the best of the European games scene, with our Legend award going to Epic.

JULY 12TH
Pacific Rim.
Del Toro enlists *Wire* and *Luther* star Idris Elba for this sci-fi film about giant battle bots.

JULY 25TH
ChinaJoy 2013.
The largest trade show and expo for China's online games scene returns.

JULY 30TH
Casual Connect USA 2013.
Talks from Facebook, King and more at Casual Connect USA, which has moved to San Fran'.

JULY 12TH
Dynasty Warriors 8.
Yet another instalment of Koei's ubiquitous action game that never seems to change.

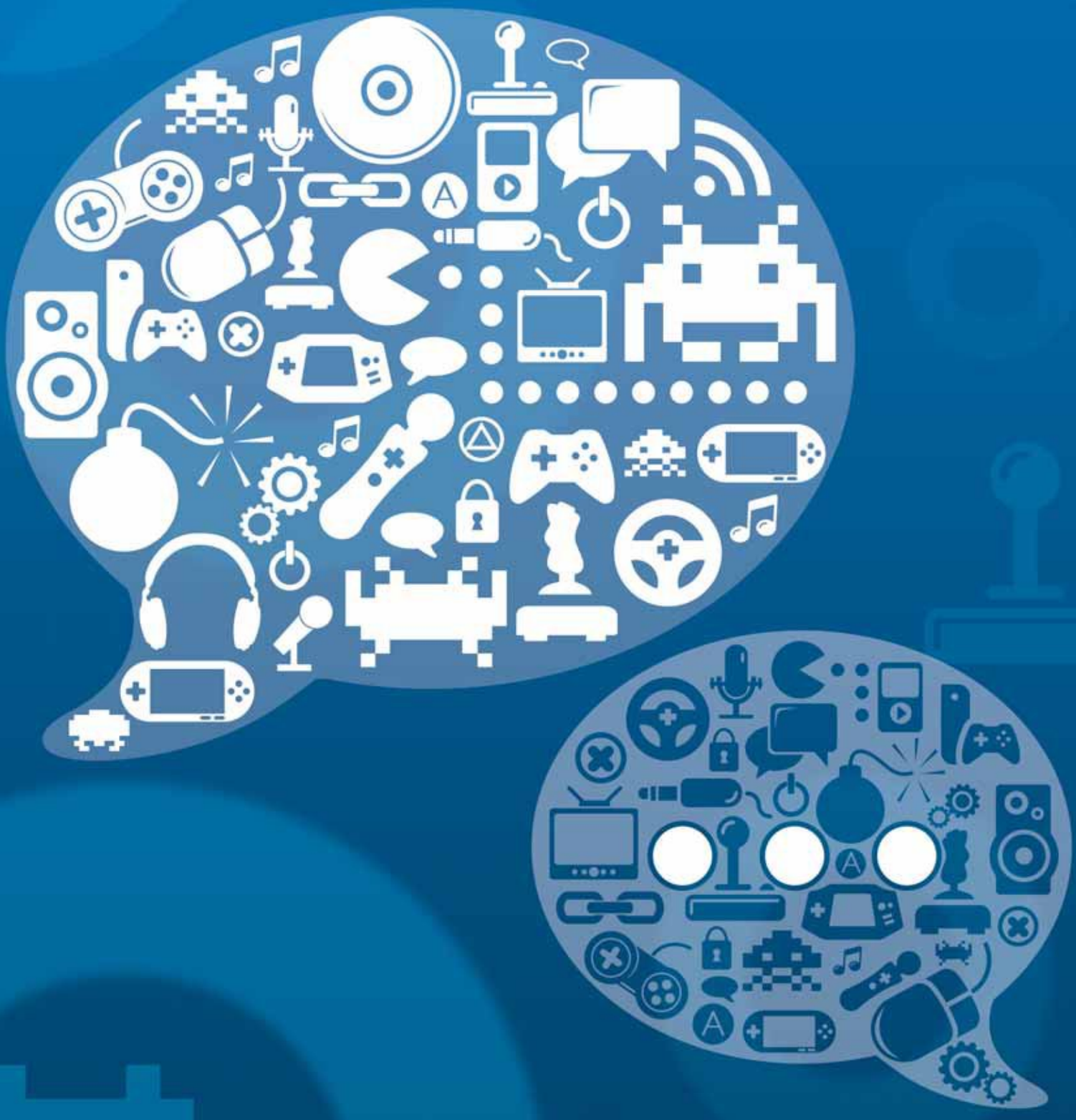
JULY 18TH
Nelson Mandela Day.
Celebrating the heroic actions of the African leader who continues to inspire even now.

JULY 26TH
Pikmin 3.
Nintendo's long-awaited sequel in its cutesy real-time strategy series arrives on Wii U.

JULY 30TH
Friendship Day.
Getting high and getting by with a little help from our friends. Someone like you.

To find out more about Deep Silver's publishing, marketing and promotional services, go to **www.deepsilver.com**

Feeling social?
Talk to the professionals



To take your career to the next level visit
amiqus.com or call **01925 839700**

amiqus

recruitment specialists for the games industry

Daring to do more

The Dare to be Digital games development contest is back, and increasingly, it's inspiring entrants to consider more than just the processes and practices of games design, as **Will Freeman** discovers

Top-to-bottom: Paper Planes' Jane Barrie and Sophia George of Swallowtail Games, and this year's BAFTA Ones to Watch winners, Kid of a Big Deal (main)

EARLY IN JUNE this year, 15 student teams set out on a journey that may ultimately lead them to the video games BAFTAs.

They are the latest entrants to the Dare to be Digital development competition, which gives each team just nine weeks to make an entirely new game. They are, however, supported by experienced industry mentors, and provided with facilities by organiser Abertay University.

Each of the games created goes on to be shown to thousands of members of the public at the free Dare ProtoPlay computer games festival, which this years runs from August 8th to 11th in Dundee's Caird Hall and City Square in Scotland. There the creations will be judged by industry experts and the public, before a final selection are put forward for the BAFTA Ones to Watch Award, presented at the main BAFTA games ceremony next spring.

The team members themselves will learn about the mechanics of games development, scheduling, team structuring and even promoting their games, but there are also far less tangible benefits; one being confidence in their ideas and abilities.

EMPIRE BUILDING

Confidence in that context can also serve as a foundation for many things for young developers, including the ability and will to be entrepreneurial and self-publish.

And looking back over the recent winners of the contest's associated BAFTA award, the idea of tackling every aspect of running a games studio is clearly something that Dare entrants embrace.

"Dare to be Digital does a great job promoting this mentality that there are many other things to making a game product than simply developing the game," says Kimi Sulopuisto of Kind of a Big Deal, which won the BAFTA Ones to Watch accolade in 2013.

> ***"Dare does a great job promoting this mentality that there are many other things to a game product than simply developing the game."***
>
> Kimi Sulopuisto, Kind of a Big Deal

"The teams are very much responsible for their PR – blogs, Facebook and so on – print art and decorating the ProtoPlay booth, and creating their own image. It's a challenge, but it's also very exciting."

And Sulopuisto is not alone in his experience of the event.

"Dare made us think about creating a commercially viable product, so that when we were finished we realised that if the game was good enough to win the competition it should be good enough for the general public," states Sophia George, BAFTA Ones to Watch winner with the rest of the Swallowtail team in 2012. "We had a lot of praise from the Dare mentors that their children would enjoy our game *Tick Tock Toys*, so we felt very encouraged by their support."

And George, who was recently instated as the V&A gallery's games designer in residence, has plenty of lessons to pass on to other entrants having learned much from Dare herself.

"Think about the big picture: the product, monetisation, social media integration, PR," she says. "None of these things should be an afterthought. The act of uploading your game to Google Play or Apple's App Store or whatever is the easy part. But hitting home with the whole package; well, it takes a lot of work. On the other hand, remember that your game is the core of your efforts."

A SENSE OF SELF

Talking to the entrants already underway with their creations this year, it's also apparent that they are quickly developing a creative confidence and already eying the likes of self-publishing.

"We as a team are definitely interested in self-publishing our team and having support from professional games companies is what we look forward to and hope to achieve by the end of Dare," offers Elbert Lim of Lunavark Studio, which is currently toiling away at this year's Dare.

And it is self-publishing specifically that has already peaked the interest of another Dare to be Digital 2013 studio, Paper Planes, as the team's Jane Barrie explains.

"The industry is changing and there are now more opportunities for consumers to get access to a wider range of games," she states. "Allowing a young studio the opportunity to self-publish gives them the chance to create games independently, rather than going through typical methods. Self-publishing allows studios to take more risks and therefore encourages creativity."

Clearly, Dare serves as inspiring stuff for its studios; hardly surprising considering the company they are keeping.

This year the 75 student team members will receive mentoring from members of Dare's Developer Accord, including Cobra Mobile, Codemasters, Denki, Jagex, Lift London, Ninja Kiwi, Outplay Entertainment, Reflections, Ruffian Games, Sega Europe, Sony Computer Entertainment Europe and Tag Games.

Teams from China, England, India, Ireland, Norway and Scotland have entered this year, and will be tackling making games for Android phones and tablets, iPad, iPhone, Ouya, PC and the Xbox 360.

If you're keen to see what they create and meet some potential future talent, be sure to visit Dundee this August. ■

www.daretobedigital.com

A World in Motion

VICON

Performance capture
has never been so easy.

Introducing Vicon Cara.

Email cara@vicon.com to book your demo today

www.vicon.com

Variable declarations

//COMMENT: BUSINESS

Facebook's forgotten future

Nick Gibson charts what's happened to Facebook gaming, and what the road ahead looks like

Gambling games, such as Zynga Poker (above), are still some of the most popular on Facebook, says Gibson, but what are their prospects today?

IT SEEMS REMARKABLE to think that less than two years ago, Facebook gaming was being heralded as the future of the sector, with the hype around the explosive growth of market leader Zynga helping to fuel a virtuous cycle of new start-ups, major VC investment and high profile acquisitions.

A glance at today's headlines and Zynga is still regarded as the bellwether. its precipitous commercial decline seeming to parallel a vicious cycle of market exits for major players such as EA, VC apathy and studio closures. This month I want to explore what has actually happened to Facebook gaming and what its new future looks like.

Facebook gaming has undoubtedly developed a deeply ingrained image problem. There is a widely and long held notion that Facebook gaming was all hype and no substance; a bubble that, with EA's exit and Zynga's decline, has now burst, with the player base evaporating. Even amongst those that don't wholly subscribe to this theory, there is a commonly held view in particular amongst hardcore gamers and more traditional games developers that Facebook games are worthless and devoid of any lasting appeal as they don't conform to traditional gameplay categories or provide sufficient challenge to even merit being called games.

The problem is that these are not actually supported by facts.

BUBBLE TROUBLE

First, let's tackle the bubble prognosis. Unlike the dotcom bubble in which user numbers were treated like revenue because so few companies actually had material revenue to talk of, Facebook gaming's growth has been built on a solid revenue foundation. This was exemplified by Zynga whose first four years saw it go from zero to $1.1 billion in revenues; an astounding feat in any industry let alone an industry as competitive as modern video games.

Since then, Zynga's sales may have slipped into an alarming decline, but it is simply no longer the bellwether it once was and other developers have been leaping into the gaps that it and the likes of EA have created. Following its Q1 filings earlier this year, Facebook revealed that despite a 37 per cent decline in bookings for Zynga during the period, other games developers' bookings increased 60 per cent, leading to a highly respectable 15 per cent increase in overall games revenues. So, not only did the Facebook games market grow but, according to Facebook, it also reached record levels, with some $700 million in gross revenues. Including revenues from other social avenues – particularly mobile social – social games still represents a rapidly growing multi-billion dollar market.

What about the evaporating player base? Despite appearances, Facebook remains one of the most popular games platforms – if not the single most popular platform – in the world, with over 250 million unique players per month, a number that Facebook indicates has been growing. A glance at the current Facebook games charts reveals that the type of games that these players enjoy most has not really changed for years, with puzzle games, casual sims and social gambling games still the most popular and, at the same time, maligned categories. However, the very features that Facebook games detractors complain about tend to be the very features that most appeal to the majority of Facebook players: their – often 'challenge-less' – simplicity, their comparatively crude graphics, their social features and their gameplay compulsion loops. Many individual games may not have lasting appeal but the variety of titles and the ease with which players can try out and switch to new games clearly does.

CHOPPY WATERS

It's clearly not all plain sailing for Facebook's prospects, and its future is entirely reliant on its appeal as a social network rather than simply as a games portal. It is still a platform suffering from incessant tinkering and policy alterations. While confined to Flash and friction-creating plug-ins, it will struggle to attract the core console gamer in any comparable volume.

It has yet to work out how to do mobile games besides providing player registrations and logins, and offerings advertising leads. From the former, it generates no revenue despite the majority of top grossing mobile games using them. With over 260 million Facebook-to-mobile games click-throughs per month, there is, however, genuine value in the latter and this hints at a deeper opportunity for it.

Despite its recent partnership with Unity to promote mid and hardcore Facebook games, it is not going to be losing its primary focus on casual gamers any time soon and nor should it. Facebook's enduring popularity is a reflection of the huge diversity of players that our industry is now capable of attracting. You don't have to like someone's tastes to respect their right to have them, and the taste preferences of quarter of a billion gamers are difficult to dismiss. ■

Nick Gibson is a director at Games Investor Consulting, providing research, strategy consulting and corporate finance services to the games, media and finance industries. **www.gamesinvestor.com**

//COMMENT: STUDIO MANAGEMENT

Why employment branding matters

Creative Assembly's **Alex Wright-Manning** on how to attract the talent that's not looking for jobs

IT'S BEEN JUST over a year since Valve's company handbook made its way onto the internet at large.

It's a fantastic vision, cleverly conceived and artfully composed, and it generated considerable debate among the industry, and indeed beyond, with its tales of flat organisational structures, multidisciplinary teams and employee empowerment.

Working in recruitment at one of UK development's grande dames, what struck me most of all was a stylised solar system diagram towards the end of the handbook. This showed all the aspects of Valve's development process orbiting around one celestial body; hiring. For Valve, hiring well is the most important thing in the universe. I couldn't agree more.

A games studio is not defined by its management structure, development practices or even its product output, but by its people, and it's widely accepted throughout the industry that attracting the very best talent available into your organisation is vital to success. In this intensely competitive climate, how do you ensure that your studio is able to attract, engage and retain high quality development staff?

THE OTHER TALENT

Most recruitment traffic via advertising, agencies and social media will consist of people actually looking for a job, which of course is its purpose. These methods generally attract those candidates who are actively seeking a new role and have read that particular advertisement: at best around ten per cent of the candidate pool. This ten per cent likely haven't just applied for your role either, and in the case of agency applicants, it's almost certain that you'll be competing with several other organisations as the agent bids to maximise the potential of their highly sought after commodity.

So, how to attract the other 90 per cent of professionals who aren't looking for a new job right now? Your star programmer, firmly ensconced at a triple-A studio, won't think to visit your site for the latest jobs or follow your social media recruitment feeds, so chances are they'll never be aware what a great place your studio is to work at. They'll rebuff the advances of agents or internal recruiters, and will likely only have a set group of organisations that they'd consider applying to of their own accord. So the key is to be one of the studios that high-end talent will gravitate towards.

Marketing and product branding are vital areas for the games industry. But how often do you think about how your studio environment is branded and marketed? Your employer brand denotes your company's reputation as an employer, as the image of your organisation as a 'great place to work'. Get your employer branding right, and you'll go a long way to becoming the industry's most sought after professionals.

The most important aspect of employer branding internally is the employee value proposition, or EVP. This is used to define an organisation's employment offering to attract, engage and retain talented candidates and employees. What a job has to offer them in terms of the work itself, the work environment and the characteristics and values of the organisation, the EVP determines what an employee will deliver in terms of time, commitment, skills and expertise. Formulating an EVP requires some serious reflection on your company's identity and it's necessary to be brutally honest with yourself.

BE WHAT YOU ARE

Firstly, you need to decide what your core offering is and focus on it. And no less important, also decide what you're not. It's no use selling your studio if what you claim to be is not what people experience in their jobs.

Establishing an employee value proposition to attract new recruits like the Creative Assembly staffer above is vital, says Wright-Manning

Secondly, decide what's really important to your organisation and use this as the core of your EVP. Although you don't need an elaborate mission statement to define your values, you do need to know what you stand for as a business. Think about what you're really passionate about and what shines through in everything you do.

Lastly, be different. A clear and unique EVP is the ideal way to stand out from your competitors, particularly in an industry such as games where they're all doing pretty much the same thing. Talk to your existing staff to find out what it's really like to work for you and take that as a starting point for developing your EVP. ■

Alex Wright-Manning is talent acquisition manager at Creative Assembly, the studio behind RTS series Total War. This month, he stands in for his colleague Tim Heaton.
www.creative-assembly.co.uk

//EXTRA CONTENT ONLINE

"Some time last year, two black PCs rolled into the Climax offices. These seemingly simple PC cases, as is common practice, contained the innards of the early PS4 alpha dev kits. We were about to ride into the next generation."

Claire Blackshaw, Climax

"Narrative in games is a very hot topic right now, and this is why I feel it's worth trying to summarise the discussion so far and add my own thoughts into the melting pot. It also helps that I am in the middle of designing the narrative for Aphelio's next game."

Michael Walker, Aphelio

"The first part of this series identified the skill gap and a lack of targeted financial support as two major hurdles. This second and final part will consider the social aspect and its implications within a relatively small community such as Malta."

Stephen Caruana, Pixie Software

To see all of our reader blogs visit: www.develop-online.net | Email craig.chapple@intentmedia.co.uk to contribute your own blog

ARM®

Optimize graphics experiences
for mobile devices

Mali Developer Center

malideveloper.arm.com

The Architecture for the Digital World®

© ARM Ltd. AD389 | 06.13

BETA

DEVELOPMENT FEATURES, IN[illegible]VIEWS, ESS[illegible]ORE

Mark Pincus in conversation p20

Smooth operators

We uncover how Bossa turned a game jam experiment into an online sensation unlike any other, p16

Essential guide to the Develop Conference p23

Getting talent across the border p29

Success in a heartbeat

In a matter of days, Surgeon Simulator turned from a playful idea at a game jam to an online phenomenon. The team behind the creation tell **Will Freeman** the story of thier success

Bossa's David Miller (above), and the Surgeon Simulator team (main, left-to-right): James Broadway, Jack Good, Tom Jackson, Luke Williams and Kate Bryant

WHEN A TEAM from London studio Bossa spent a weekend at the local installment of this year's Global Game Jam, they weren't expecting to create an industry sensation.

Like the thousands of other entrants spread across 68 countries, they hoped to flex some creative muscle, have plenty of fun, and just maybe create a game that would be remembered by those that were there.

But the Bossa team was different from the rest. They built *Surgeon Simulator* at the game jam; a creation that quickly found millions of online fans, beguiled the Steam community and propelled Bossa – already a thriving start-up – several rungs up the industry status ladder.

The story of artist Jack Good, designer Luke Williams, developer Tom Jackson and lead artist James Broadly is a tale of near-literal overnight success. On Saturday morning they began the game jam. Two days later they were sharing their creation with colleagues and noticing it gaining unexpected traction online, and by the Wednesday the four staff were pulled away from their existing projects to set about building *Surgeon Simulator* as a full commercial release. Shortly after numerous fan-created Youtube videos of the game were getting millions of views, and then some of the most highly acclaimed developers in the world were came knocking at Bossa's door. More on that later.

BEAT IT

The fascinating story of *Surgeon Simulator* really began the moment the Global Game Jam organisers revealed their theme for 2013;

> ***"We decided to ignore any ideals we might have about what you should do in a game jam. We had our idea and we found it funny."***
>
> Luke Williams, Bossa Studios

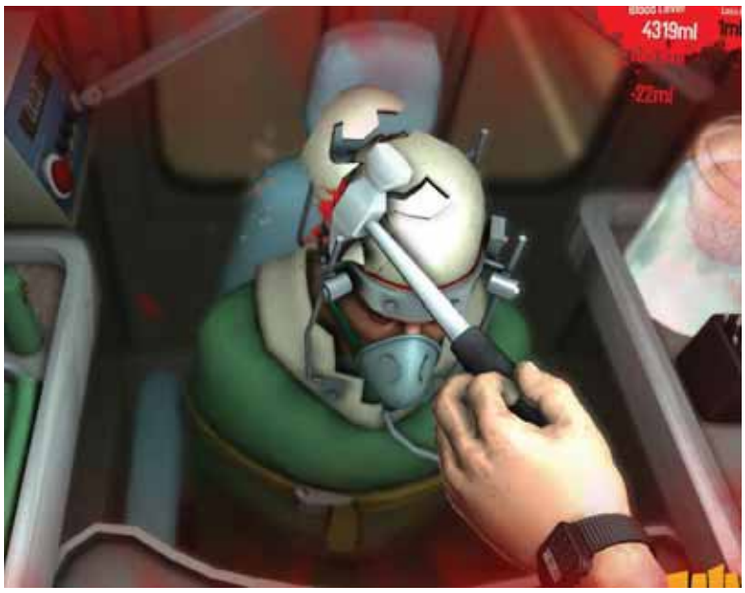
the typically nebulous line 'Sound of a Heartbeat'. As other teams pondered ideas around rhythm and love, the quartet from Bossa quickly turned their minds to heart transplant surgery, besotted by the idea that such a complicated process could be presented in a game jam production.

"We had a few ideas, but that one seemed to be the one that we kept coming back to each time, and I think it was our first idea of the day. It was the one that we took seriously," says Jackson.

Jackson's use of the word 'seriously' is immediately greeted by giggling from his colleagues, and for good reason. *Surgeon Simulator* is a hilarious game to play, and perhaps just as comical to watch. In contrast to what its title suggests, it is a release that both celebrates chaos and gives realism the middle finger. Tear away the layers of code and at the game's beating heart lays a very good joke. It's not built from set-ups and punch lines, but from the intentionally ridiculous idea that with a *QWOP*-style interface you could hope to perform a heart transplant.

All that considered, the notion of taking their game earnestly seems less than fitting.

"At the time we felt there were two ways of approaching the theme," reveals Williams. "We knew teams could take it seriously, and go down this artistic route, maybe around the rhythm of the heartbeat or something like that. And then there was us, coming along with our stupid, literal approach. I did wonder if we were being a little too obvious in our daft way. But at the same time, we made the decision to ignore any ideals we might have about what you should do in a game jam. We had our idea, we found it funny, and we wanted to spend 48 hours laughing."



THE HOLE STORY

Listen to the team's own account of the next two days, and it almost sounds farcical. They designed the hole in a torso in which most of *Surgeon Simulator's* action is focused before even checking how internal organs are arranged and the shape they take together. The name itself – a cheeky nod to Excalibur Publishing's utterly sincere simulator games – was conceived with moments left to go, picked as it would make for easy UI design in a scramble for the finish line.

"It's not that we immediately knew what this would be," explains Broadley. "It was really the humour that was the thing. We all found it really funny, and we were quickly laughing about all the things that would come from it, even before we had implemented anything. The whole process was really funny."

But any suggestion that the team's work at the game jam was as maladroit as the medical procedures seen in the gameplay would be misleading. By anybody's standards their work over 48 hours was impressive, and in those two short days they laid all the foundations for what was to come.

But it remains that *Surgeon Simulator* was made in a spirit of silliness, and though the sleep deprived team almost lost faith in in how funny their creation was just hours from the game jam's deadline, clearly the humour struck a chord beyond their clique.

The Bossa four admit they felt their colleagues back at the studio might get the joke, but they never even speculated that it would have a universal appeal.

> ***"It wasn't just that people were playing it at their own machines. People were crowded around each other's desks, yelling, shouting and trying to join in."***
>
> Kate Bryant, Bossa Studios

There was an early clue, though, that the team had crafted something special. During the presentation at the end of the game jam on Sunday, *Surgeon Simulator*'s time on stage was accompanied by a chorus of audience laughter so loud the game's creators couldn't make themselves heard. They could never of guessed what was to come, but they did see first hand the impact just seeing *Surgeon Simulator* being played could have.

BACK TO WORK

The next morning, they were back at work, with a version of the game to share with their colleagues before the Global Game Jam website had made *Surgeon Simulator* widely available to the masses.

Bossa's Kate Bryant, who was soon to step on board as producer on the commercial release of *Surgeon Simulator*, noticed something special was going on that same day.

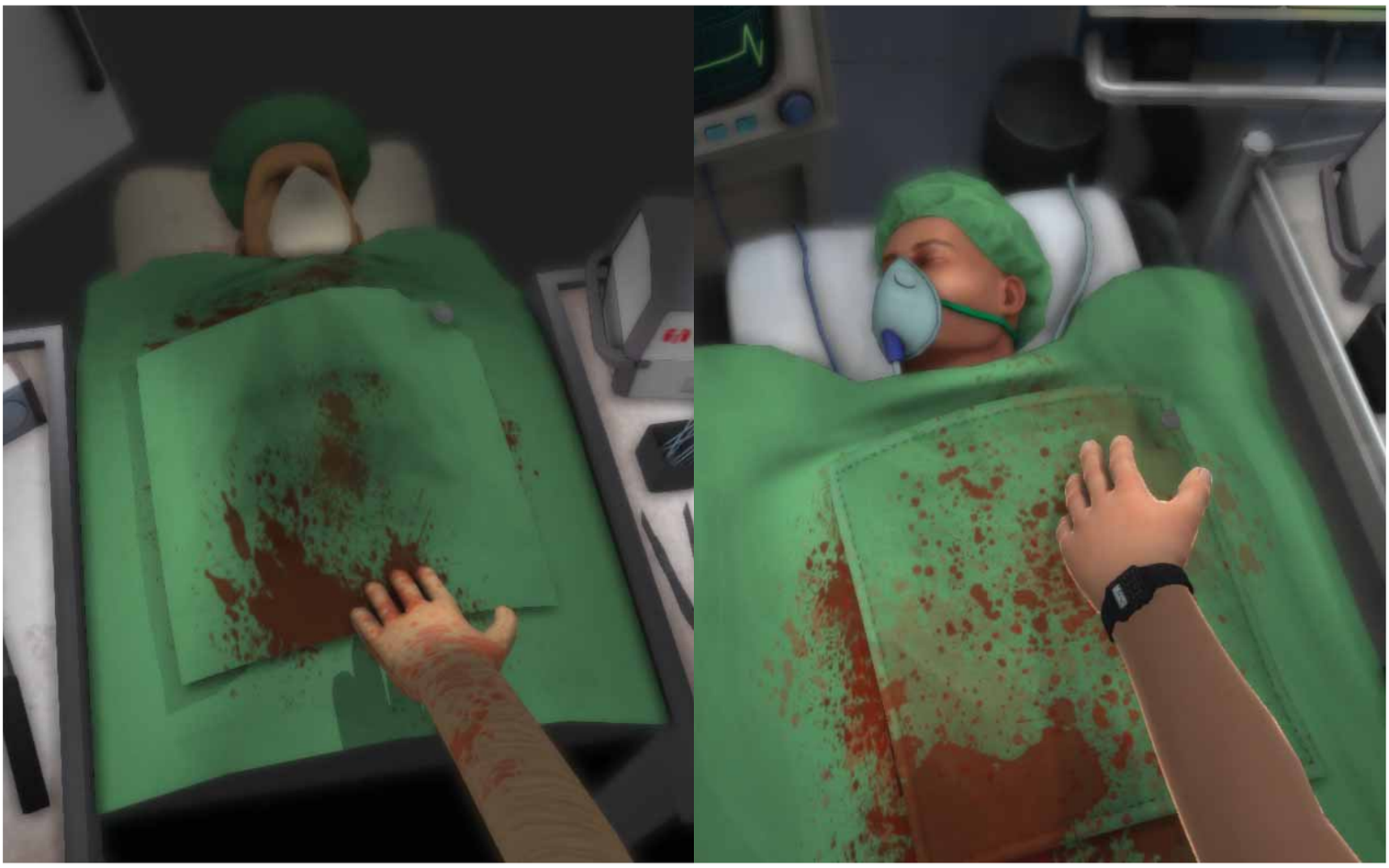
"They brought it back to the office, and it wasn't just that people were playing it at their own machines," Bryant remembers. "People were crowded around each other's desks, yelling and shouting and trying to join in. In fact, the game almost became more fun as more people gathered around a computer.

"So we realised quite early that it was something pretty special within the office. Then we saw how well *Surgeon Simulator* was doing on YouTube."

And there Bryant has touched on something important. It was the phenomenally influential video sharing website that would quickly play a major part in *Surgeon Simulator's* snowballing success.

Elsewhere in the studio that day some of the staff were taking to social media, sharing *Surgeon Simulator* with a few hand picked journalists and key opinion formers.

Bossa's Roberta Lucca (above), and (main) a selection of the madcap items and medical approaches found in Surgeon Simulator



The original Global Game Jam version of Surgeon Simulator (above, left) side-by-side with the full commercial release (above, right)

A matter of hours had passed since the game entered the office, and already a scattering of *Surgeon Simulator* videos appeared online. By the next morning Youtube had films of the game pouring in. Many were consumer commentaries, where a player had recorded their reaction as they took in the game for the first time, squealing with delight as they knocked scalpels and bone saws to the floor. Just as the Bossa team had discovered, watching people enjoy the game proved hugely entertaining. The videos' play counters spiraled; particularly in the case of those uploaded by Felix Kjellberg, better know as 'Youtuber' PewDiePie.

Kjellberg can boast of over eight million subscribers to his Youtube channel, and lots of them liked *Surgeon Simulator*.

As the days ticked away millions saw a game that was not so long ago that playful idea in a game jam.

UNDER THE KNIFE

But Bossa didn't have a chance to see the viewer numbers come in before they acted. For them to take advantage of the hype, they needed to be ready before it arrived.

"It was obvious straight away we needed to do something with this," says Bossa's senior marketing manager David Miller, later adding: "Of course, at the beginning we only had the start of that Youtube sensation, so it still took a bit of a leap on our behalf."

And so it was that the senior management team decided they needed to devote at least a fortnight to see where *Surgeon Simulator* could go next.

"By Wednesday, we asked the guys to stop working on the games they'd been working on up until the Friday before the game jam, and got them focused on *Surgeon Simulator* for the time being," explains Miller.

It was then decided *Surgeon Simulator* deserved more time, and the game made in 48 hours was given 48 days more. It would need fleshing out and rebuilding, all while keeping the manic spirit of the original alive. In other words, it was *Surgeon Simulator's* turn to go under the knife.

What is especially remarkable, though, is that Bossa had the gumption to put projects on hold and bet hundreds of worker hours on their new game.

> ***"Videos that were made had this universal appeal. Most game videos are only interesting to people interested in games."***
>
> James Broadly, Bossa Studios

"The type of studio we are allowed us to move so quickly," offers Roberta Lucca, co-founder and CMO at Bossa. "We're very focused on prototypes anyway, and we've created them very frequently. Up until *Surgeon Simulator* we were creating them every two weeks, and we kind of created this culture of collectively building on each other's creativity and ideas.

We are small enough to do that, and that is how we believe it should be. So we really already had the right culture to take *Surgeon Simulator* further when it first arrived here."

And so is was the original four, bolstered with Bryant's support, worked with fervor to add new features and polish. And they had plenty of inspiration. Youtube video makers, their commenters and the three million players of the original version on Kongregate had already built a whole new layer of in-jokes and memes on the game jam foundation. And through emergent gameplay that same group were in their own small way hinting at possible new elements for Bossa to introduce.

Look closely, and you'll see that the new game is jammed with gentle references to the fanbase's influence, as well details in the world that elaborate on Youtuber's jokes.

The team eventually built Surgeon Simulator 2013, as the full version was called, which would pass through Steam Greenlight, gaining enough votes to break Valve's chart. By April 19th this year *Surgeon Simulator 2013* was available to buy through Steam, and players flocked to try the new build, fuelling more of those videos, and a new wave of fan art. Now *Surgeon Simulator 2013* players were performing live action versions and undertaking illustrated tributes that were making their way to Bossa's letterbox. One day a print of Chris Buckley's *Ctrl+Alt+Del* webcomic even came in, featuring frames especially devoted to *Surgeon Simulator*.

MEET THE MEDIC

At the time of writing it also emerged that a special *Team Fortress 2* version is underway, using assets direct from Valve (*see panel: Mad Doctor*). The game has also gone to Mac App Store, and an Oculus Rift and Razer Hydra two-handed version is underway. Things have already gone very well indeed for *Surgeon Simulator*, and it has plenty left to give.

THE HEART VALVES

A promotional video for Valve's Team Fortress 2 inspired Bossa's slapstick approach

PERHAPS THE BIGGEST moment for the quartet that created *Surgeon Simulator* was the day Valve got in touch about the opportunity to build a *Team Fortress 2*-themed version of the game.

Still in development at the time of writing, *Surgeon Simulator 2013*'s *Team Fortress 2* adaptation will be made available as a free update to those that own the game already, and included with all future downloads of the full game.

And most excitingly for Bossa's team, it will be made using Valve's own *Team Fortress 2* assets.

But what is the connection between those two games?

Quite simply, a *Team Fortress 2* promotional video named Meet the Medic (*pictured*) proved a great influence over the game jam version of *Surgeon Simulator*. It remained as a desktop wallpaper on one of the team's laptops as they built the game, and can take part of the credit for its atmosphere.

"The video gave us that feel of the organs being more like anatomical models rather than the real thing, and that made the game more appealing, and let people chuck the organs about a little more carelessly," explains Bossa artist Jack Good. "It gave us quite an important part of the game."

But with hindsight, do the team that built it have a better understanding of why it worked so well?

"It's hard to say if it's any one thing, because the success is down to a combination of things," says Broadley. "But one thing I'm aware of is that the videos that were made had this universal appeal. Most game videos are only interesting to people interested in games. The *Surgeon Simulator* videos, however, seemed to be funny to anybody. That really helped the initial surge in popularity. And it happens to be fun to play too, which helps."

"I think it really helped that the guys made the gameplay very ambiguous and very open, in terms of how to succeed in the game," adds Bryant. "That enticed people. And then there are all those details; the 'call Trisha' thing became a huge meme, for the community, and that was just a Post-It Note in the background in the reception room. The game world has a depth of detail that is attractive, and lets players create their own stories."

Regardless of the logic and reason, *Surgeon Simulator* has succeeded. Reviews for the title from European press alone have been positive, but, more importantly, the viral traction the game has gained from video sharing has been immense. But that's not all its done so far. It's also been hugely helpful to Bossa at an important time.

"Before we were making social games on Facebook, and we were almost restricted by Facebook in terms of the universe that we could tap into for social interactions," explains Lucca. "We only really had gifting people and little actually meaningful. Now we're in a situation where we really connect with our community and really can share experiences with our network. For the player, sharing their experiences with the developer can be far more magical."

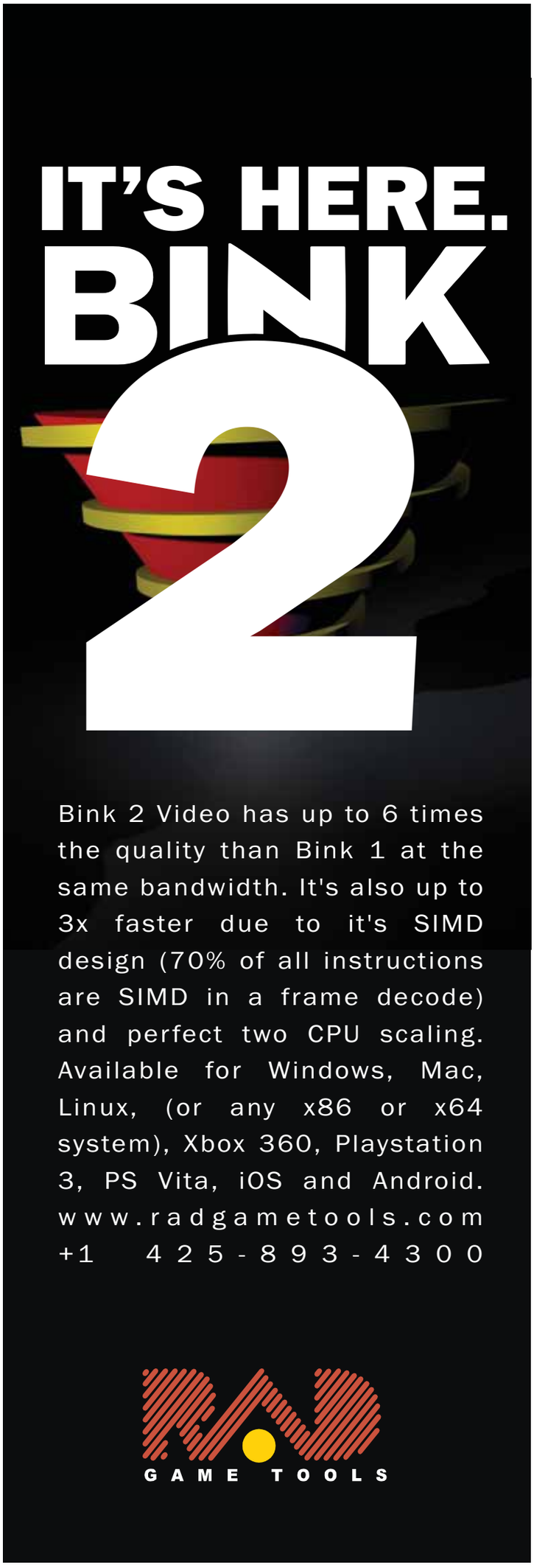
Making the game has also taught the team and Bossa instrumental lessons about marketing, virality and employee freedom. It's brought the eyes of the world to Bossa, and the opportunity to work with creative giants like Valve. For the young team at *Surgeon Simulator*'s creative reigns it's brought a rollercoaster of hard work and opportunity, and it's clear they are still in love with what they made. Ideas for new features still spill forth as the team talk about *Surgeon Simulator*, and clearly the game is as infectious for its creators as it is for those fans.

Which just leaves the future.

"We imagine there'll be more content and we imagine there'll be more platforms," says a tightlipped Miller. "I know there's lots more ideas, but it remains an organic process."

And so it is the Bossa staff must return to their work on *Surgeon Simulator* and the other games underway at the studio. Whatever does happen, one thing is almost certain; Bossa has not put down the scalpel for the last time. ■

www.bossastudios.com


IT'S HERE.
BINK 2
Bink 2 Video has up to 6 times the quality than Bink 1 at the same bandwidth. It's also up to 3x faster due to it's SIMD design (70% of all instructions are SIMD in a frame decode) and perfect two CPU scaling. Available for Windows, Mac, Linux, (or any x86 or x64 system), Xbox 360, Playstation 3, PS Vita, iOS and Android.
www.radgametools.com
+1 425-893-4300
GAME TOOLS

Zynga on free

In this extract from his new book Free-to-Play: Making Money From Games You Give Away, consultant **Will Luton** speaks to Zynga CEO Mark Pincus about the finer points of games monetisation

Will Luton (above), was formerly creative director at Mobile Pie. He now uses his knowledge of the mobile games space as a games consultant

Will Luton: Free-to-play has ostensibly allowed Zynga to exist. Why is it such a successful business model?
Mark Pincus: In 2007, when we launched Zynga, I thought that games were like search before Google. It was a business, an industry that was considered mature and over. And games hadn't even gotten started.

Google had the same experience: It was like the fifteenth or the twenty-fifth search engine to appear and believed search was already over, or so everybody thought.

But Google showed us that search could be so much more useful in our lives that the company ignited, obviously, the search revolution.

Similarly, I believed that what had kept games from being a mass-market activity was they asked too much of the users, of the players. And I didn't believe it was a lack of demand from people to play. I thought the bar was too high to play. And so, like so many other people I had to kind of give up game playing for a while, because the cost was too high, not so much the economic cost, but the commitment was too high, whether it was consoles or even online, downloading, or even going to a website. It turns out that games, in a lot of ways, are like comic books, in the sense that some people will seek out a comic book store and buy comics. But most people, even if they enjoy comics, can't rationalise spending time during the day sitting with a comic book. However, if there's a comic strip in the newspaper that they trip over, they can enjoy it, find it through serendipity, and add it to their day. So, I thought, what if we could lower the barriers to play: Take out the price, take out the download, take out searching and navigating to it, and even take out the on-ramp of having to learn it and having to go through tutorials and everything to play a game.

In the beginning I said, if you need more than three clicks to know what it is and why you want it, it's not going to make it in the real consumer market.

> ***"If you give us 15 minutes, we can give you skills. We can give you progression. We can give you enhanced relationships, not just entertainment."***
>
> Mark Pincus, Zynga

What we saw was that if we put games where the people were, made them free, and made them easily understandable, people would play. Beyond that we saw that if we made them short session, made them not live and not require live engagement, and made them social so players wouldn't just try them, they would stay and play.

Fairly early on I realised that when you take the barriers down to zero, you make them free. We can't make it any cheaper than free. But then after that we could start to actually offer people value back. We then started attacking the concept that games are a waste of time and we could deliver what I think of as ROI (return on investment), as a social ROI or an ROI on your time.

Now, if you give us 15 minutes, we can give you skills. We can give you progression. We can give you enhanced relationships, not just entertainment.

So I thought that there was this fundamental value paradigm and equation that we could keep innovating on and improving for decades to come, because you can get the barriers and the cost down to zero. Then maybe once that's done, you can go past zero and start going into the plus category, the credit category. You can get rid of the debits on one side and start adding credits on the other. So what I realised was that at some point you're getting people to try games and to play games.

Eventually, if you're really successful as an industry, you're competing with whole other life activities. There's a level of entertainment, OK? But people have less and less time for entertainment in their lives, so can we get people to multitask and play games while they're watching TV or movies, or doing other things? Can we make play so bite-sized that you can put it in these found moments? Can we make play so bite-sized that there's, with mobile now, so many moments in your day that you're currently filling with pure productivity, not pleasure and entertainment. Right now – and I

READ MORE

THIS INTERVIEW IS an extract from the book Free-to-Play: Making Money From Games You Give Away, by consultant Will Luton.

Conceived and written to offer an accessible and complete guide to the free-to-play business model, Luton's newly published volume covers discovering how the economics work, how to design games that keep players, how to gather and use player data, how to market your game, and much else needed to build, run and make money from games that are given away.

To find out more and to purchase a copy visit **www.will-luton.co.uk/free-to-play-book**.

say this to our new hires at Zynga – smartphones allow us to be productive every waking moment of the day. Most of that productivity comes in the form of e-mail, text messaging, one-on-one communication, social media or browsing, and web browsing.

It means that also our opportunity cost of doing anything other than being on a smartphone has gone up. So in the 1950s, 60s, 70s, or 80s you would come home from work with a briefcase containing printouts to read, and other than picking up the phone and bothering somebody, you couldn't be that productive. Now you can be productive every waking moment, which both helps and hurts us as a medium. On one hand, it helps us because there's so many more moments that we can also fit into, because we're not tethered to the TV or the PC. On the other hand, we're also competing with other forums' productivity. As an industry, we will kill it against one-way video entertainment, because it asks too much of you, until it also gets bite-sized and multi-taskable.

Where we go from here is that we could start to give you something that's beyond entertainment; for instance, we could make you a world-class poker player that could compete in a world series of poker; let you make a new friend, get married, or get out of calling your long lost relative.

Luton: Is free-to-play a better deal for players than paid content?
Pincus: Well, free-to-play is for sure a better deal, especially when you think about the fact that anywhere between 90 and 98 per cent of players never pay. So it is a better deal, but you have to remember that for most of those people it may not be a better deal, because they weren't buying the paid content. So I don't believe that free-to-play and free and social games have actually cannibalised the video game industry. Just like I don't believe that Craigslist killed newspapers. I think it was doing just fine on its own. Newspapers were killing themselves, and Craigslist and eBay actually were good for them. They expanded peoples' participation in classified ads and people saw value.

> ***"Free-to-play is for sure a better deal, especially when you think about the fact that anywhere between 90 and 98 per cent of players never pay."***
>
> Mark Pincus, Zynga

Free-to-play gaming has been a net positive for the whole gaming industry, because it's introduced gaming or reintroduced it to millions of people. So it's hard to say it's apples-to-apples, that it's a better deal on that. But yes, I think that free-to-play gaming is a great deal for people.

Luton: What do you think is the key to making a free-to-play game a good free-to-play game?
Pincus: I don't know. To me it's not what makes it a good free-to-play game; it's what makes it a good mass-market game. The reason that's the real point for me is that a free-to-play game for the most part, but not always, needs to be a mass-market game. Now, we can have different gradations of mass market. You could have these Card Battler and CCG games. I mean you can have games that only have an audience of a million people, and they can make very good money for a developer.

But a million people constitute a big game. To say it could be as small as a million people is saying how big an audience you have to focus on with free. I'd be surprised to see a free-to-play model work for games that only reached an audience of 100,000 people. So the game has to be pretty mass market, even if it's a hardcore game or a niche.

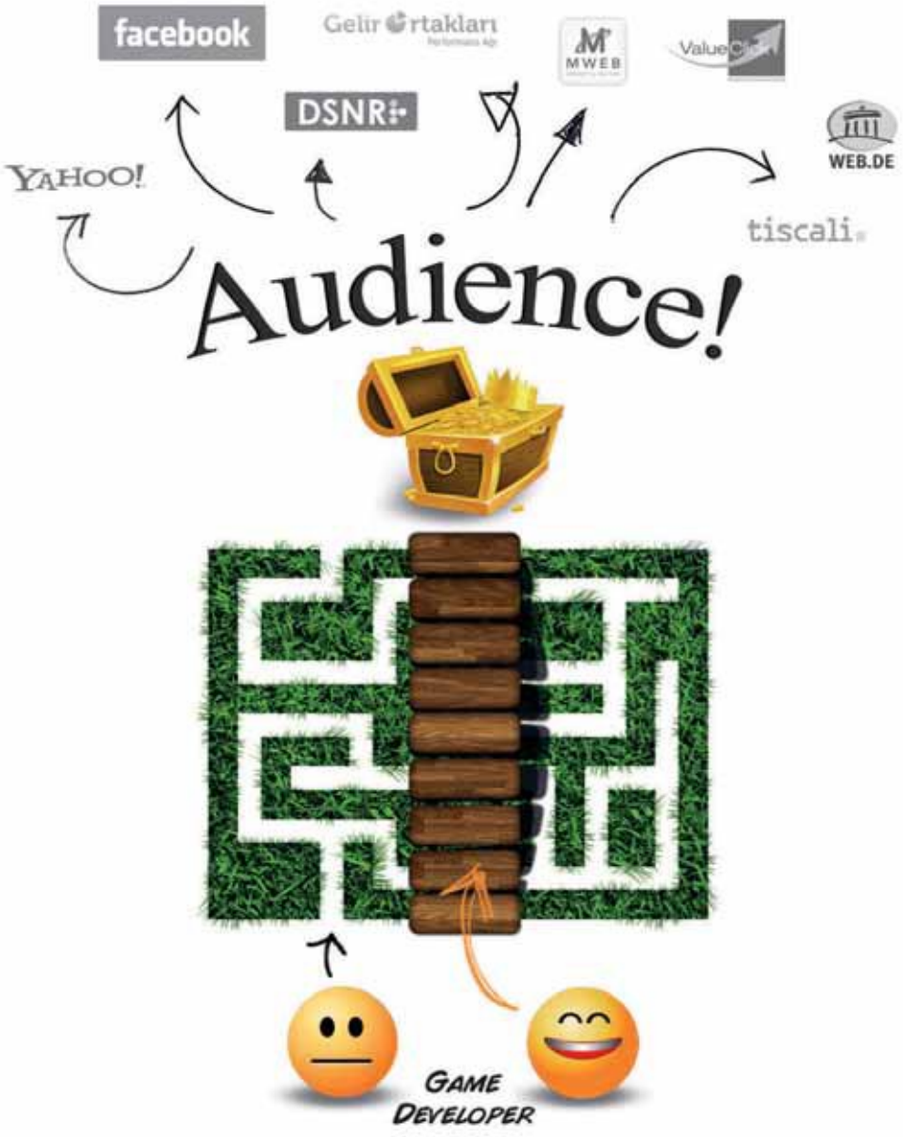
What makes it great? It has to have an easy, compelling on-ramp. Part of what makes it great is that it has to fit within a mass-market marketing model, which means that it has to be able to spread virally or spread through advertisements or some other kind of promotion. And that means that it needs to prove itself and its engagement for people extremely quickly. It's probably not going to be a planned purchase, like a console game. ■

To read this interview in full, check out Free-to-Play: Making Money From Games You Give Away by Will Luton, available now.

Mark Pincus from Zynga (above left) is confident that free-to-play games such as CityVille (above) have not cannibalised the games market

32.000.000.000 gaming ads per month

**To attract more relevant users to YOUR game,
we are showing 12.500 gaming ads across the globe – every second.**



Take the easy way to reach your audience.

Game Genetics

SMART DISTRIBUTION OF DIGITAL GAMES

BEACH AND EVERYONE

The UK is finally basking in warm summer weather, which can only mean one thing. It's time once again to head to Brighton for the annual Develop Conference

TUESDAY, JULY 9TH marks the return of the Develop Conference in Brighton, meaning one of the industry's most popular events is now remarkably close.

On the coast of the characterful city that is Brighton, some 1,600 industry figures are expected to gather to take in sessions and panels, join workshops, network and, for a very select view that know who they are, even take a dip in the bracing sea.

Now in its eighth year, the conference welcomes the industry's finest from across the globe, providing a platform to share ideas and experiences with an atmosphere like no other industry get-together.

This year the Develop Conference sees over 100 individuals deliver more than 100 sessions on an impressive range of developer-centric themes and issues. Lead speakers from Microsoft, SCE, Amazon, Boss Alien, AMD, Carbine, Epic and numerous others are set to make attending the event essential; with art, audio, business, coding, design, production, indie and cutting-edge trends all receiving devoted tracks.

As ever, the event will kick off with Evolve throughout Tuesday, July 9th. A conference in its own right, Evolve focuses on all that is cutting-edge and innovative in game development, meaning next-gen, smart TV and convergence, cloud gaming, Windows 8, HTML 5 and crowdfunding will all enjoy some attention this year. There's also the Indie Dev Day on Thursday, July 11th, which delivers a devoted track designed specifically for established independent studios, new start-ups, teams teetering on the brink of becoming an indie, freelance developers and students.

Here we've gathered all the essential information on attending, the conference highlights, the networking opportunities and all the key facts for those preparing to attend and those at the event itself.

See you in Brighton.

TALKING SPEAKERS

Any industry conference is nothing without its speakers and sessions, and the Develop Conference is no different. This year it brings together a wealth of top-tier industry experts, poised to deliver a healthy variety of presentations, panels and workshops, covering topics for everything from small studios and students to triple-A outfits and long-serving veterans.

Here we've picked five of the best from the cream of the crop, including highlights likes PlayStation 4 lead architect Mark Cerny's keynote, and hidden gems like cyberpsychologist Berni Good's look at the relationship shared between the infamous uncanny valley and psychopathy.

You'll never make every session at the Develop Conference, but you won't want to miss these.

EDITOR'S SESSION PICK: MARK CERNY

Industry legend Mark Cerny *(above)* will use this year's keynote address **Changing the Game: Developing into the Next Generation** to take delegates through his vision for the future of games development. As lead system architect of Sony's PlayStation 4, Cerny will examine and explain the journey he has been on to bring the console to reality. He will look at the lessons learned from previous console generations, the future vision for PS4 and how embracing the indie community will have a key role in fulfilling that vision.
Room 2, 9:30am - 10:30am, July 10th

EDITOR'S SESSION PICK: JEREMY GAFFNEY

WHILE SOME DEVELOPERS are making millions, others can't get off the launch pad. In his business track keynote **Things That Make You Go MMM: Successful Massively Multiplayer Monetisation**, Carbine Studios president Jeremy Gaffney *(below)* will cover the fascinating phenomenon of the changing monetisation strategies in the MMO space, analysing what's working, what isn't and what's to come. His talk will be aimed towards providing as many hard numbers, real-world examples, and occasionally offbeat practical anecdotes as can be fitted into 45 minutes – giving a new look as to where Carbine and the rest of the industry are moving.
Room 2, 16:00pm - 16:45pm, July 10th

EDITOR'S SESSION PICK: LEE SCHUNEMAN

IN THE OPENING Evolve keynote **London Calling: 'Beyond the Box' in Connected Entertainment**, Lee Schuneman *(below)*, head of Microsoft's newest studio, Lift London, will discuss what it's like to originate new IP, manage creative risk and explore new business models in delivering connected experiences for tablets, mobiles and TVs. Viewing Lift London as a space for new ideas, new ways of developing games, and new futures for indie developers, Schuneman will also outline his vision for the next exciting phase of Cloud-based gaming innovation.
Room 4, 9:30am - 10:15am, July 9th

EDITOR'S SESSION PICK: TIM SWEENY

EPIC GAMES' TIM Sweeney *(above)* has spent the best part of two decades trying to foresee what the future holds for games developers. He is the man tasked with ensuring that future iterations of the Unreal Engine remain state-of-the-art. So it is Sweeney that must weigh up industry trends in everything from graphics, processing power and gameplay to the production pipelines that studios use to produce their games. The Develop Conference's coding track keynote, **A Conversation with Tim Sweeney** will see the industry veteran share insights into the future of the sector.
Room 2, 11:15am - 12:00pm, July 11th

EDITOR'S SESSION PICK: BERNI GOOD

IN A REVIEW of the latest psychological research aligned to the uncanny valley, cyberpsychologist Berni Good *(below)* is set to discuss **Gamer Perception of Psychopathy in Characters - 'Why Were We Equipped With This Eerie Sensation?'**. She will pick apart scientific findings about the ways players respond to games, with a particular focus on psychopathy in the uncanny valley, highlighting what aspects of this research games designers and artists can utilise in an applied perspective.
Room 4, 11:00am - 11:45am, July 10th

CREATIVE ASSEMBLY™
WINNER OF BEST IN-HOUSE STUDIO
2012 DEVELOP AWARDS
NOW HIRING
FOR THE AWARD-WINNING TOTAL WAR™ SERIES, A NEW ALIEN™ IP GAME AND FOR DEVELOPMENT ON A FUTURE GENERATION OF CONSOLES.
SEGA®
www.sega.com
WWW.CREATIVE-ASSEMBLY.COM/JOBS

© SEGA. SEGA and the SEGA logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of SEGA Corporation. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. The Creative Assembly, Total War and the Total War logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of The Creative Assembly Limited. ALL OTHER TRADEMARKS ARE THE PROPERTY OF THEIR RESPECTIVE OWNERS. ALIEN™ © 2013 TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX FILM CORPORATION. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

THE CONFERENCE APP

THIS YEAR THE Develop Conference app is back, new and improved, and designed solely to help you get the most out of your stay in Brighton. Available for iOS, Windows 8, BlackBerry and Android, the app contains all the information you need on sessions, speakers, networking opportunities, the venue and location, and lets you build your own schedule so you don't waste a second when the conference is in full swing.

THE DEVELOP INDUSTRY EXCELLENCE AWARDS: JULY 10TH

RETURNING FOR THEIR 11th year, the Develop Industry Excellence Awards remain one of the most significant, relevant development sector award shows globally. They also serve as the only peer-voted awards for the UK and European games industry, and this year will see over 500 people attend, between them representing companies from all over the world.

This year the Develop Industry Excellence Awards once again take place in Brighton at the Hilton Metropole Hotel – the same venue where the Develop in Brighton Conference is held – on the evening of July 10th.

And as ever, the awards will shine a spotlight on the games, studios, technologies, services and individuals that have shaped the industry, and will be attended by key designers, programmers, artists, musicians, executives and analysts.

Ninety-eight different companies have been listed as finalists for the evening event.

The shortlists for the 19 main prizes represent 36 different games and their creative talent, 49 different game studios and 10 different European countries.

We have also improved our awards for Creative Contribution, and also acknowledged the work of external European art and audio teams on vast international projects like *Halo 4* and *Ni no Kuni*.

Details on the finalists and award categories can be found online at **www.developawards.com.**

THE EXPO

RUNNING ALONGSIDE THE Develop in Brighton Conference on Wednesday July 10th and Thursday July 11th this year is the Develop Expo (below).

It remains free for all visitors to attend, and brings together some of Europe's most innovative companies from every facet of the games development industry in a single, spacious area.

And when you need to give yourself a chance to stop, at the heart of the Expo you'll find the Develop Bar and Networking Lounge, meaning you won't have to go far to buy colleagues and peers a drink, organise an informal business meeting with a potential future client, or just mix with other visitors as they pass through.

The Expo also features the Indie Showcase, which demonstrates some of the best independently developed projects underway today.

So, when you're planning your visit to the Develop Conference, be sure to set aside some time to explore the Expo and related events; it's a decision you'll certainly not regret.

Companies participating this year include:
ARM
Audiokinetic
Centre for Digital
Codeplay
Dolby
Epic Games
Flaming Pumpkin Studios
Future
Game in Scotland
King
Kingston University
Microsoft
Nintendo of Europe
One Thumb Mobile
Outplay
Peer One Hosting
Perforce
Reflections a Ubisoft Studio
Reloaded Productions
Unreal Engine
Valve
Wellcome Trust
Unity
YoYo Games

AFTER HOURS

THE DEVELOP IN Brighton Conference is not just about learning. There's also ample opportunity for mixing with peers, making new contacts and even having a bit of fun. Here we bring you a guide to what's happening outside of the conference:

TUESDAY, JULY 9TH
Unreal Engine Ice Breaker Welcome Drinks: 6pm, Bar 106, Hilton Brighton Metropole

GamesAid Poker Tournament: 8pm, Grosvenor G Casino

WEDNESDAY, JULY 10TH
Develop Expo Booth Crawl: 5pm, Expo hall

Develop Industry Excellence Awards: 7pm, Oxford Suite, Hilton Brighton Metropole

THURSDAY, JULY 12TH
Dolby's Close of Conference Beers: 6pm, Hilton Brighton Metropole

THE AUDIO TRACK

JULY 11TH THIS year sees the return of a devoted one-day Audio Track, co-organised by *Develop's* audio specialist and Heard About columnist John Broomhall. The track is dedicated to the often underserved discipline that is games sound. While audio continues to struggle to get anything like the budget and attention given to art and design in many studios, at the Develop Conference there's no such disregard.

Speakers from IO Interactive, SCEE, Microsoft, Ninja Theory and others will dispence essential lessons on making your games sound great, in what will be a must-attend track for audio professionals both veteran and novice.

WHO'S ATTENDING?

HERE ARE JUST some of the companies attending Develop in Brighton 2013: AI Factory, **Amazon**, AMD, **Audiokinetic**, Babel, **Big Bit**, Big Fish, **Boing Splash**, Born Ready, **Boss Alien**, Brave Games, **Carallon**, Carbine, **CCP Games**, Codeplay Software, **Creatives in the Attic**, Crytek, **Darren Barnett Productions**, Datascope Recruitment, **Deloitte**, Dlala Studios, **Dolby**, Double Fine, **Dreadnought Studios**, Eidolon Studios, **EVIL27 Games**, Everyplay, **Exient**, Exit Games, **Exobyte**, Fish in a Bottle, **Fireproof Studios**, First Touch Games, **Flaming Pumpkin Studios**, Four Door Lemon, **Game in Scotland**, Grey Alien Games, **Grumpy Ferret**, GSM Productions, **Harbottle & Lewis**, Horizon Studios, **Hotsauce Interactive**, I Fight Bears, **IO Interactive**, Imagination Technologies, **InnoGames**, Intel, **Intelligent Artefacts**, Interactive Studio Management, **Into Mania**, Jagex, **Kinesthetic Games**, Kingston University, **Kotori Studios**, Kuju Entertainment, **Lift London**, Littleloud, **Lowrider Sound**, Magicbrew, **Makielab**, Marmalade, **Matmi**, Max Bowser, **Mediatonic**, Microsoft, **Middlesex University**, Mind Candy, **Mindflock**, Multiplay, **NHTV**, Breda University, **Nice Face Games**, Ninja Theory, **Nintendo of Europe**, Opposable Games, **Papaya Mobile**, Peer One Hosting, **Perforce Software**, Playjam, **Positech Games**, Razor Sharp Studios, **Red Phantom Games**, Reed Technology, **Reflections**, Remode, **Robot**, Overlord Games, **Rodeo Games**, Sega Europe, **Serco, Shadowpuma Games**, Simteractive, **Solutions Recruitment**, Sony Computer Entertainment, **Southampton Solent University**, sprogglers.com, **Sprung Studios**, Spry Fox, **Square Enix**, Storybricks, **Sumo Digital**, Supermassive Games, **Team17 Digital**, TesTime, **The Chinese Room**, The Coding Cat, **thesoundofmalin**, Ubisoft, **UKTI**, Unity, **UOL**, Valve, **Warner Brothers**, Wellcome Trust, **Wish Studios**, Worthington Sharpe, **Xiotex Studios**, YoYo Games, **Zatzu Media**.

WANT TO GET YOUR HANDS ON ONE OF THESE?

DEVELOP AWARDS 2013

Wednesday July 10th from 7pm
Brighton Hilton Metropole

Platinum Partners

CRYTEK
Microsoft
DEEP SILVER

Gold Partners

amiqus
PERFORCE Version everything.
SUMO DIGITAL a Foundation 9 Entertainment Studio
Testronic Our assurance is your guarantee
ukie
PitbullStudio

Table Gift Partner

opm recruitment

Exclusive Drinks Partner

naturalmotion GAMES

Award Partner

ARM

Events Partners

PLAYMOB.
NOVA SCOTIA CANADA

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OUR FINALISTS

NEW IP
Clay Jam - Fat Pebble
Dishonored - Arkane Studios
The Room - Fireproof Games
Clash of Clans – Supercell
Warface - Crytek
Hotline Miami - Dennaton Games
Surgeon Simulator - Bossa Studios
Thomas Was Alone - Mike Bithell

USE OF A LICENCE OR IP
DmC: Devil May Cry - Ninja Theory
LEGO City Undercover – Traveller's Tales
Magic 2013 - Stainless Games
Sonic All-Stars Racing Transformed - Sumo Digital
LittleBigPlanet Vita - Tarsier Studios
The Snowman and the Snowdog - Crash Lab
Wonderbook: Book of Spells - London Studio
Angry Birds Star Wars - Rovio

VISUAL ARTS
Crysis 3 - Crytek
Forza Horizon - Playground Games
Hotline Miami - Dennaton Games
Awesomenauts - Ronimo Games
LittleBigPlanet Vita - Tarsier Studios
Rayman Jungle Run - Pastagames
The Room - Fireproof Games
CSR Racing - Boss Alien

AUDIO ACCOMPLISHMENT
Fable: The Journey - Lionhead
Wonderbook: Book of Spells - London Studio
Hotline Miami - Dennaton Games
Kinect Sesame Street - Soho Productions
Crysis 3 - Crytek
Sniper Elite 2 - Rebellion
The Room - Fireproof Games
Forza Horizon - Playground Games

USE OF NARRATIVE
Dishonored - Arkane Studios
The 39 Steps - The Story Mechanics
Crysis 3 - Crytek
The Room - Fireproof Games
ZombiU - Ubisoft Montpellier
Thomas Was Alone - Mike Bithell
Xi: Continuum - nDreams
Wonderbook: Book of Spells - London Studio

PUBLISHING HERO
Ripstone
Kickstarter UK
KISS
Valve
NaturalMotion Games
Square Enix London Studios
AppyNation
Strategic Content - SCEE

ONLINE INNOVATION
RaceNet - Codemasters
Hitman: Absolution - Contracts - IO Interactive
Illyriad - Illyriad
Smart As - Climax Studios
Turbulenz Platform - Turbulenz
Curiosity - 22Cans

TECHNICAL INNOVATION
Hitman Absolution Crowd Tech - IO Interactive
Unreal Engine - Epic Games
Just Dance TV - Ubisoft
Marmalade Juice - Marmalade
Oculus Rift - Oculus VR
GameMaker - YoYo Games
Wonderbook - London Studio
Dimensional Imaging

TOOLS PROVIDER
Epic Games
Marmalade
Unity Technologies
FMOD
Geomerics
Donya Labs
Havok
Perforce

ENGINE
GameMaker - YoYo Games
Unity Engine - Unity Technologies
CryEngine 3 - Crytek
Havok Vision Engine - Havok
Unreal Engine - Epic Games
HeroEngine 2 - Idea Fabrik

SERVICES
LocalizeDirect
Testronic Labs
Nimrod Productions
VMC Game Labs
Pinewood Studios
Audiomotion
Player Research
Quantic Dream

CREATIVE CONTRIBUTION - AUDIO
High Score Productions - Harry Potter Kinect
Side - Ni no Kuni: Wrath of the White Witch
David Housden - Thomas Was Alone
The Audio Guys - Sonic & AllStars Racing Transformed
Wave Studios - Kinect Sesame Street
Savalas Sound - Halo 4: Spartans Ops

CREATIVE CONTRIBUTION - VISUALS
Realtime UK - Wargaming trailers
Cubic Motion - LEGO City Undercover
Tarsier Studios - LittleBigPlanet Karting
Faceware Technologies and CounterPunch Studios - Crysis 3
Axis Animation - Halo 4: Spartan Ops
Rabcat - Forza Horizon

RECRUITER
Avatar Games
Specialmove
Creative Personnel
Guru Careers
Aardvark Swift
OPM Recruitment
Datascope
Amiqus

MICRO STUDIO
Crash Lab
Dennaton Games
Hotsauce Interactive
Mike Bithell
FuturLab
Terry Cavanagh
Big Head Games
Fireproof Games

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
Wargaming
Mind Candy
King
The Foundry
Mediatonic
Abertay University
Prototype Fund
Jagex
Eutechnyx

INDEPENDENT STUDIO
Crytek
Ninja Theory
CCP
Playground Games
Supercell
Yippee Entertainment
Dlala
Sumo Digital

IN-HOUSE STUDIO
Traveller's Tales
Boss Alien
Ubisoft Montpellier
Creative Assembly
Arkane Studios
IO Interactive
Sports Interactive
Criterion Games

NEW STUDIO
Playground Games
Born Ready Games
Soho Productions
Dlala
22Cans
Boss Alien
FuturLab
Hotsauce Interactive

DEVELOPMENT LEGEND
Tim Sweeney / Mark Rein

TICKETS: Gold Table: £2,250 + VAT **Standard Table:** £1,950 + VAT **Seat:** £195 + VAT
Contact: **Kathryn.Humphrey@intentmedia.co.uk** or call **01992 535646**
Sponsorship enquiries: **Alex.Boucher@intentmedia.co.uk** or call **01992 535647**

www.developawards.com

Border control

The skills shortage in the UK has forced studios to look overseas for specific recruits. **Aaron Lee** checks out the rules and regulations that are slowing studios from bringing new talent to their shores

IMMIGRATION IS A litigious issue that sits uncomfortably with the multiculturalism of the modern world, which games are very much a part of.

For an industry such as games development, immigration is an important wellspring for talent and specialist skills that cannot be found locally.

How are studios confronting the cacophony of immigration laws in the UK? And is the need for skilled workers as prevalent as its been in previous years?

In September 2011, the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) identified that skilled migrant workers should be sought in order to plug the UK skills shortage. As studios in Britain scour far and wide for new talent, the education system has yet to catah up with the industry's demands, and may not for some time. Faced with this, studios have no option but to look abroad for personnel with specific skills to aid their projects.

CLOSING THE BORDER

The first stop for UK studios that have exhausted their search on the island nation is mainland Europe.

"If we couldn't hire freely from Europe we would be struggling to hire the staff we need to complete our current projects to the standard they need to attain," Brynley Gibson, executive producer at Headstrong Games,

> ***"Recruiting migrant workers can be unpredictable. We have had a migrant worker's visa approved within weeks, whereas some have taken months."***
>
> Sara McNaught, Jagex

maker of *House of the Dead: Overkill* and *Battalion Wars 2*, tells *Develop*. "This is not just about bodies but about finding candidates that hit the right quality bar.

"There is not a lack of candidates out there, but there is a lack in the quality of candidates and, of course, every developer wants to take only the best they can."

But Britain's membership of the EU, and the positive immigration laws that citizens are entitled to because of it, is now under increasing scrutiny from David Cameron's coalition government. And that's a change that Gibson doesn't want to see.

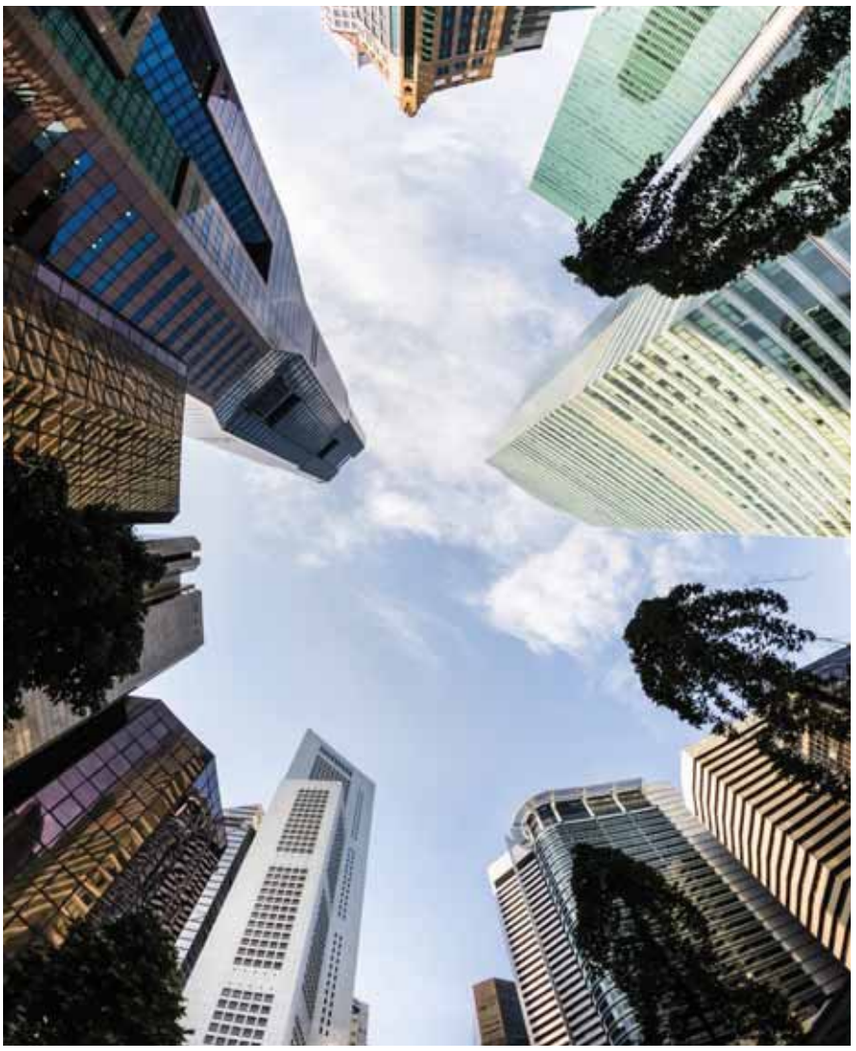
"I seriously doubt the current legislation is going to change radically as these rules provide so much benefit to the UK, and for citizens of the UK to work elsewhere. If something is good for the bottom line I can't see it being allowed to regress.

"However, with Cameron promising a referendum on Europe in the next parliament and UKIP [UK Independence Party] on an undeniable upturn, there is a threat, however slight. Restrictions wouldn't just be damaging for the games industry, but for any skilled employer in the UK."

LEFT IN LIMBO

Gibson's concerns are shared by many other studios and segments of the UK games industry. Although Britain's immigration system is by no means the most complex, it's not especially straightforward either, as recuiters at several studios have confirmed. ▶

Top-to-bottom: Sara McNaught of Jagex and Ian Robinson of law firm Fragomen



CASE STUDY: SINGAPORE

Jamie Stowe, now at 22Cans

JAMIE STOWE, NOW technical designer at 22Cans in Guildford, UK, explains how he got on when he emigrated to Singapore: "My wife is Malaysian and we worked at Codemasters for both the Malaysian and UK studios where we met. Codemasters were unable to secure a permanent UK visa for her, and she was forced to leave the country. Having worked in Singapore before, she decided to return there and secured a job with Ubisoft. I decided to follow her; we weren't married at the time, and it was quite difficult to secure a job.

"I mention my wife, because she is the single reason I was able to secure the job in Singapore. Ubisoft were taking less of a risk with me as they were already employing my girlfriend, so could be confident I would stick around. I flew out to visit my wife at my own expense and at the same time was invited for multiple interviews with Ubisoft. They were not particularly looking to hire, but on returning to UK was offered the job in mid-June 2009. My wife had joined in April.

"Once I was offered the job, I had to fill in an application for an Employee Pass (visa). Ubisoft took care of all the costs and most of the paperwork, I only had to fill in one form of about eight pages. By the next morning the application had been approved and I had a letter that would grant me stay in Singapore as long as I was employed by Ubisoft. I joined Ubisoft in July 2009, and they paid for my flight and first month of accommodation.

"Singapore has probably the most efficient [immigration system] in the world, and as long as you meet criteria on salary, work history and education, it is very straightforward to be employed there."

Top-to-bottom: Emma-Jayne Cole of Creative Assembly and Jo Twist of UKIE. Main: Singapore, where immigration requests are said to be among the fastest in the world today

Sara McNaught, talent acquisition specialist at Jagex, has been through the process of recruiting new starters from overseas on a number of occasions, and she argues that the officials are still leaving businesses and applicants with gaping uncertainties.

"Recruiting for employees outside of the European Economic Area (EEA) where Jagex has sponsored a migrant worker can be an unpredictable process with regards to timings. We have had a migrant worker's visa approved within weeks, whereas some have taken months. It can be hard on the migrant worker, as they are in 'limbo' until they receive a response from the Home Office. They also need an idea of timings in order to give notice to their current employer and arrange relocating to the UK.

"From an employer's perspective, not knowing the time frame isn't helpful either as we are unable to predict when the worker will be able to join the studio, and so unable to plan projects as effectively."

NEED-TO-KNOW BASICS

If, like some of the studios above, hiring skilled staff from abroad is the only way for you to fill those waiting specialist seats, don't despair. Immigration law in the UK and elsewhere is shifting all the time. But by taking the time to understand the legislation, even at a basic level, you stand a better chance of filling those specialist vacancies sooner rather than later.

"I certainly make it my business to make sure I am fully aware of any barriers there are to helping someone move across from another country to settling into the UK," agrees Emma-Jayne Cole, HR business partner at Creative Assembly. "By being immigration-savvy, it can lead a studio to having the very best developers on-board no matter where they come from."

> ***"If we couldn't hire freely from Europe we would be struggling to hire the staff we need to complete our current projects."***
>
> Brynley Gibson, Headstrong Games

The system in the UK is somewhat faster than other countries but it still takes time. With the help of global immigration law specialist Fragomen LLP, here are some of the basics you can expect if you intend to recruit immigrants for the first time:

- **Your company needs to be a registered sponsor:** It's not normally possible to recruit a non-EU worker unless you have a sponsor licence – an agreement that your firm will take responsibility for the individual in question. Sponsor licences are granted to legitimate businesses, which is something all games companies should be able to attest quite readily. The applications themselves are dense and can take at least two weeks to prepare. Once submitted, they take currently around a month to be processed and granted.

- **Advertising for jobs:** Before you can hire from outside the UK, you must also pass the Resident Labour Market Test, to prove there are no suitable UK workers available. This has a danger of slowing down your approval process, but exists for the benefit of UK residents. An advert must be placed in Jobcentre Plus and one other location for 28 days. Any potentially suitable UK residents must ('not unreasonably') be interviewed and record must be kept. The Home Office has relaxed its rules here. It recognises that there is a national shortage of skilled systems engineers in the video games sector and has waived the advertising requirement.

- **Salary:** A new migrant hire would need a Tier 2 General visa as oppose to the ICT visa for existing employees. Tier 2 General workers must to be paid at least £20,300 or the going rate for the occupation. The minimum salary for systems engineers, for example, is £24,900 for a new entrant or £30,600 for an experienced worker.

- **Securing a visa:** Visa applications from outside of the UK cost £483 and generally take between five and 15 days. However, applications from outside the UK are subject to the coalition government's cap on immigration. The cap is not the issue, as only

Brynley Gibson of Headstrong Games says skilled immigrant workers are key to the studio achieving its goals

half the available places will be used. What it does do is add to the time delay. The cap is split between 12 monthly pots and administered through the issuing of certificates of sponsorship (COS).

> ***To reach its full potential, the UK needs more home-grown talent and an immigration system that welcomes the very best people from overseas.***
>
> Jo Twist, UKIE

LOWERING THE BARRIER

"On the whole, UK immigration law and practice is at least as effective as systems elsewhere in the world. Visa applications typically take five to 15 days, a turnaround that is only exceeded by Singapore," (*see Case Study: Singapore*) explains Ian Robinson, government advisory manager for EMEA at corporate immigration law firm Fragomen.

"That is not to say there are not barriers. Visa extensions in the UK can take three or four months and the authorities hold on to passports throughout. The administrative burdens of recruiting a worker from overseas can take months. These issues cut across every sector, computer gaming included."

The process of hiring immigrants is daunting and time-consuming. Ideally, most studios would prefer to do without the additional paperwork, and thus keep their search within the borders of the UK. But until such time as there are enough UK residents with the skills the industry needs, hiring immigrants will be a necessity.

"To truly reach its full potential, the UK games industry needs more home-grown talent and an immigration system that welcomes the very best people from overseas," declares UKIE CEO Jo Twist.

She points out that UKIE has been working hard to improve the UK's own skills base through the Next Gen Skills campaign, which has successfully got computer science back on to the curriculum. But she also recognises that getting skilled workers into the UK needs to be accessible if the country's studios large and small are to remain in top order.

"We also need to have an immigration system that allows the best overseas talent easy access to this country. We know that there are some improvements that can be made to the current system. For example, we worked with the government's MAC to make sure that games companies could still use what's known as the Shortage Occupation List to fast-track certain roles. As a result, the MAC recommended adding 'games designers' to this list, making it easier to bring designers in from overseas. We will keep monitoring how this and other immigration policies are working, and we'll explore whether we can make this quicker route available for other games jobs." ■

CASE STUDY: GERMANY

Alison Simpson moved from the UK to work at InnoGames in Hamburg

ALISON SIMPSON SHARES why she left Britain to take up a job in community managment at InnoGames in Hamburg: "I first heard about InnoGames last year, while still living in the UK, as a player. I always enjoyed playing online browser games, especially MMOs, because the diversity of people playing. It was through exploring a variety of games over a long period of time that I eventually came into contact with InnoGames' *Tribal Wars*, and I was hooked from day one. I became more and more involved in the community and running of the game, and that's what led me to InnoGames.

"Before moving to Germany, I worked from the UK as an external community manager. I applied for that position with a CV and covering letter, and my interview was held over Skype. Some of the interview questions were quite tough, but no more so than you would expect in any interview process in the UK. However, I had heard that a highly detailed CV was advisable in Germany. That's what I sent and it paid off with the interview.

"Later on, after working externally since February, I expressed an interest in moving to Hamburg to work from the office, which led to me being offered a position as a lead community manager. I had a further Skype call to meet my would-be product manager, and then came to Hamburg to meet the team and discuss duties.

"As the UK is a member of the European Union, I didn't have to do anything special as a Brit to work in Hamburg. I needed to fill in a form which was supplied by the company to get a tax ID and to register my employment, and that was it.

"I expected the whole process to be far more complicated than it was in reality. InnoGames is used to bringing in new employees from all over the world, so there were already processes in place to make the transition easier. My start date was flexible, based on when I would be able to arrive in Hamburg. All I needed to do was provide a date and time my plane would be landing. Then, in May 2012, I was met at the airport by a few friendly faces, and helped with my bags over to my temporary home.

"In Hamburg, accommodation is notoriously difficult to arrange. The competition for an apartment can be fierce. But InnoGames made it really easy for me by providing a company apartment for the first weeks after my arrival.

"Once I got settled into the job, InnoGames enrolled me into German lessons with a teacher who comes into the office every week to give private tuition. Though InnoGames uses English as an official language for communication, learning German is still important for cultural reasons – and it makes it easier to order lunch, too."

JOIN THE RANKS

GUERRILLA IS NOW RECRUITING FOR ITS UPCOMING PROJECTS

- Senior Environment Artists
- Senior Character Artists
- Character Concept Artists
- Senior Asset Artists
- Senior Online Producers
- GUI Tools Programmers
- Build Engineers
- Game Programmers
- AI Programmers
- Tech Programmers

gamesjobs@guerrilla-games.com | www.guerrilla-games.com/jobs

GUERRILLA

The level best

Across the Netherlands' famously flat geography, games studios are doing all they can to establish a flourishing development community. **Will Freeman** meets the companies building an industry hub of the future

THE DUTCH GAMES industry isn't one to blow its own trumpet. While other regions jostle for a spot on the global stage, and hubs like those in Canada, Germany and the Silicon Valley effortlessly court the attention of media and consumers alike, in the Netherlands studios quietly pump out content at a ferocious rate.

If you're not convinced that the Dutch games sector has much cultural weight to it, consider some of the titles and studios that call the country home. *Killzone: Shadow Fall* is a product of local triple-A outfit Guerrilla Games. Indie darling Vlambeer and online giant Spil Games hail for the Netherlands. Even the GameMaker development platform started out life in the Utrecht municipality, as did the THQ-published *De Blob* IP.

"Although relatively small, the Dutch games industry has always been active on a global stage with triple-A games such as Guerrilla's *Killzone* franchise, but also with the booming indie scene and presence in the online space, for example with Spil Games," offers Maarten de Koning, director of business development for Europe at local games industry talent agency DDM. "Our industry is becoming more prominent every year, and the fact that Vanguard Games recently worked on *Halo Spartan Assault* proves that we can compete with other developers worldwide."

> ***"Although relatively small, the Dutch games industry has always been active on a global stage with triple-A games such as Guerrilla's Killzone franchise."***
>
> Maarten de Koning, DDM

According to a report published by Taskforce Innovation Utrecht Region titled The Dutch Games Industry: Facts and Figures, in 2012 some 330 games companies in the country employed around 3000 staff, with that number ever growing. The previous year games makers in the region turned over 150-to-225 million euros. Clearly, studios in the Netherlands mean business.

A DIVERSE APPROACH

But just why is gaming thriving from Maastricht in the south to Groningen at the country's northerly province? The simple answer is that it boasts both diversity and infrastructure across the board.

"Today the Dutch industry is extremely diverse," confirms Lennart Sas, managing director and co-owner of developer Triumph Studios. "Fuelled by new entrepreneurs and initiatives like the Dutch Game Garden, the industry here now feels like a bubbling cauldron spawning smaller companies that do things their own way, outside of established channels. It seems almost every week a new game or new company pops up."

And that diversity, argues Richard van Barneveld, strategic director at cloud gaming technology and service provider Kalydo, serves as a foundation for a robust and forward facing industry.

"The Dutch have a very strong global position in various services around the

Top-to-bottom: Lennart Sas of Triumph Studios and Maarten de Koning of DDM. Main: a scene from upcoming PS4 title Killzone: Shadow Fall by locals Guerrilla Games

CASE STUDY: GUERRILLA GAMES

Hermen Hulst of Guerrilla Games (above), and Killzone: Shadow Fall (right)

IF THE NETHERLANDS has a poster child of the capabilities of its studios, it is surely Guerrilla Games.

Founded in the year 2000 as a number of small Dutch studios merged, in 2005 it was acquired by Sony, and seven years later, welcomed the UK's Sony Cambridge into the Guerrilla Games fold.

Guerrilla really made a name for itself with the 2004 release of *Killzone*, which has since been synonymous with the PlayStation hardware line. In February this year, in New York for the unveiling of the PlayStation 4, the studio's *Killzone: Shadow Fall* took centre stage, wowing the assembled developers, press and other industry figures with its impressively muscular console visuals.

And, based as it is in the hip city of Amsterdam, Guerrilla has never struggled to attract new talent.

"I find that particularly the city of Amsterdam is a very attractive place for creative people," offers Guerrilla managing director Hermen Hulst. "It's got a cool, edgy vibe, it's international, it's got lots of cultural venues and museums, and it's easy to get to. These are important factors for games developers considering a move, of course alongside [looking for] an attractive project and studio."

Fortunately for Hulst, Guerrilla ticks all those boxes. The *Killzone* franchise remains an alluring prospect for those keen to work in a triple-A environment with Sony's hardware teams a phone call away, and the studio itself is as chic and colourful as the best of them.

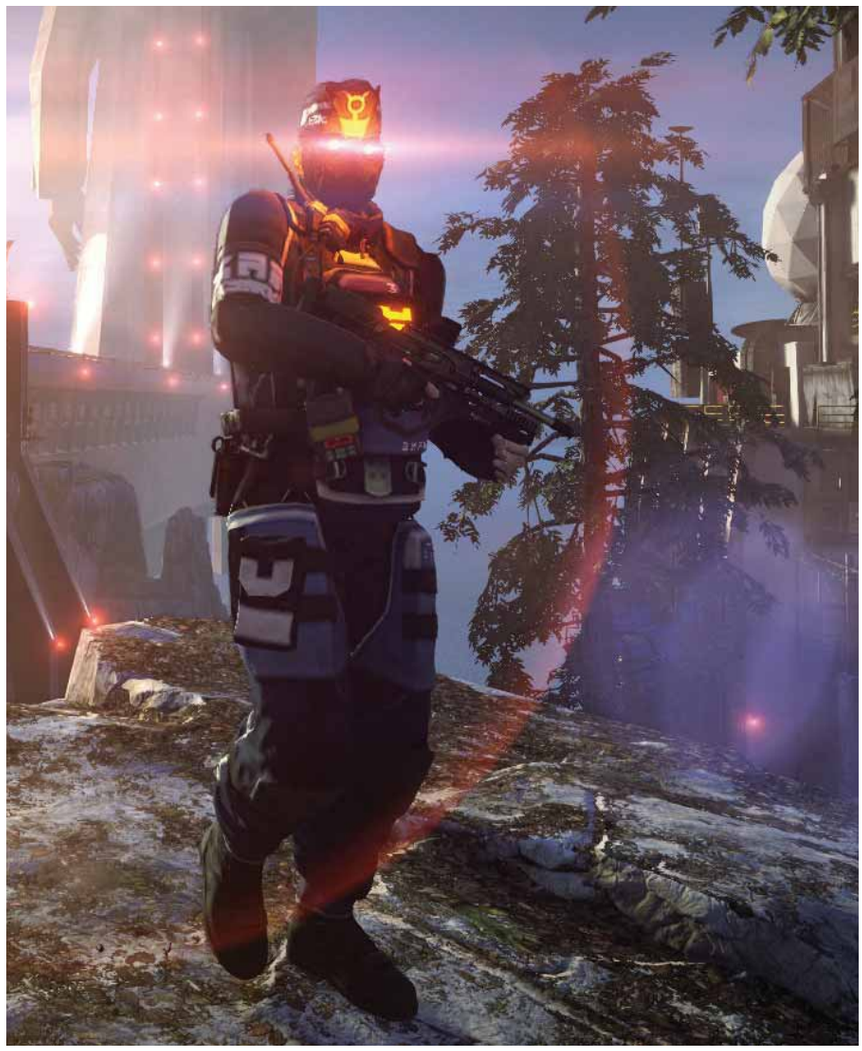
And, clearly, Hulst is besotted by his homeland's wider industry, and is also keen to highlight its current spate of growth.

"On a global stage the Dutch games development industry is still a relatively small community, but it is growing quite fast," suggests the MD. "Until recently there wasn't really an industry as such to speak of. Since a couple ago of years you see new start-ups popping up everywhere, and some of the smaller teams scaling up."

And he's equally optimistic about Amsterdam's own fortunes in games.

"The industry will continue to grow in the Netherlands, and I think Amsterdam can become a real hub for game development in the Netherlands," concludes Hulst. "I think over the coming years most Dutch games conferences and events will move to the city, and an increasing share of new studios will set up shop here."

Guerrilla Games is almost constantly hiring, and developers interested can find out more at the studio's own website or via the official PlayStation jobs board. **www.guerrilla-games.com**



'online game value chain'," he states. "For example in promotion there is Spil games and IQU, in localisation Utrax, in hosting and distribution Lease Web, for billing Global Collect and Adyen, in middleware Kalydo's cloud gaming, and for market data and research Newzoo."

Beyond the infrastructure they can tap into, Dutch games makers are – aside from noteworthy exceptions like Guerrilla and Vanguard – also less committed to the costly and competitive world of console-focused games development.

"Our dependency on major console markets is not very high, and our footprint of small developers and a strong indie community together with our leading role in serious and applied games puts us in a good position to deal with today's industry challenges and opportunities," explains Pim Bouman, chairman of the DGA, or Dutch Games Association.

SERIOUS ABOUT INDIE

Elsewhere throughout the Netherlands, independent and small studio culture also thrives, and as with hubs across the globe, an explosion in start-ups means a new generation of talent is in place for the country's future games industry.

"In the past year we've had a few more successes on the entertainment side with Ronimo's *Awesomenauts*, the recent *Reus* by Abbey Games, and Vlambeer has of course been prominent with *Luftrausers* and *Ridiculous Fishing*," confirms Thijmen Bink, CEO and technical director at independent studio Digital Dreams. "With *Ibb & Obb* coming out soon and our own *Metrico* in due time, we're all building the foundation of what will hopefully be a healthy and sustainable industry, bent on creating new interactive experiences."

> ***"Our footprint of small developers and a strong indie community together with our leading role in serious games puts us in a good position."***
>
> Pim Bouman, DGA

And over on the opposite side of the games industry, the Netherlands has a strength shared by only a few other nations, such as France. Few would perhaps guess it, but Dutch studios making serious games are surprisingly common, and a sub-sector devoted to applied games design is blossoming in the region.

"The Netherlands is ahead of the curve when it comes to serious and applied game design," says Martijn van Best, communications manager at Dutch Game Garden, a non-profit organisation supporting fostering game developers in the ▶

Invest :: Utrecht
Game capital of Europe

- Creativity meets Business
- Hub for game development, -education and events
- Dutch Game Garden: Game Incubator and Business Center
- Home to IGF nominees and game award winners
- Hotspot for young talent, startups and thriving businesses
- Gateway to European markets
- Excellent knowledge transfer and collaboration opportunities

Invest Utrecht can assist you in every way when initiating or expanding your international business in Europe. We help you select the best real estate from our top business facilities, we introduce you to potential partners & networks and we offer advice on incentives, permits, tax & legal matters.
We offer on-going support to help foreign-owned enterprises thrive.
The best part: all our services are free of charge, confidential and tailor-made to your needs.

Information & contact: Liza Groeneveld ▪ +31621124582 ▪ liza@investutrecht.com ▪ www.investutrecht.com

Top-to-bottom: Martijn van Best of Dutch Game Garden and Pim Bouman of DGA. Main image: Age of Wonders by Triumph

Netherlands. "Companies like Ranj, IJsfontein, Little Chicken, Weirdbeard and Monkeybizniz know how to make applied games that are fun and visually attractive while fulfilling the task they were created to achieve: to educate, persuade and simulate."

"Especially in the area of serious gaming The Netherlands has a strong position," confirms Albert-Jan Pomper, COO of healthcare and corporate specialist Ranj Serious Gaming. "In recent years several global corporations started to use serious games from Dutch developers. Dutch developers started to serve clients all around the globe, for example in the US, Germany and South East Asia."

But by Pomper's own admission, securing reliable scientific proof of the impact of individual serious games is tough.

"Finding funding and new business models to scale-up markets [is a challenge]," he reveals, then highlighting that: "improving the cooperation with large corporations by finding our way in their prime-business processes," as a related task to better.

GROWING PAINS

And it not just the serious gaming industry in the Netherlands that has difficulties to address; it is a touch ironic that one of the most apparent hurdles to progress that warrants addressing is born of a positive root.

"The newest challenge, in my opinion, is that we are in the growth phase at the moment," puts forward Sicco Maathuis, owner of Brightling, which makes applied games around wellbeing. "So we should get ready for the maturity phase, to be ready for the future."

> ***"The older companies are able to supply only a small percentage of these aspiring game developers; the others need to look for a job abroad."***
>
> Thijmen Bink, Digital Dreams

It's a positive approach, and reflects an optimism evident across numerous Dutch games companies, but the fact remains that, relatively, the development space in the Netherlands is yet to grow beyond its youth.

"Because the industry is still quite young here, there isn't yet a strong network of veteran devs to provide guidance to students and start-ups, to speak at events and at schools," confirms Hermen Hulst, managing director at Guerrilla Games. "As time passes this will solve itself."

Hulst also believes that the Dutch industry suffers somewhat from its geographically fragmented nature, with studios arguably spread rather thin across the country.

"The largest game dev community is Amsterdam, but the province of Utrecht has provided the most support to schools, events, and incubators," he states. "I think the city of Amsterdam, with its global appeal, has the best shot at becoming an internationally relevant game dev hub like Guildford, or Montreal, so that is where to focus should lie for industry efforts."

MONEY MATTERS

Furthermore, like almost anywhere on the globe in the modern economic environment, securing finance can be tough for Dutch studios; a problem compounded by the lack of enough locally based publishers and investors. And that is not the only concern those from other hubs will be able to empathise with. ▶

Revealed: The top 100 UK studios

Find out if you're on the list in July

OUT NOW

2012 VOL 1: The Planet's Best Developers Based on Retail Revenue

2012 VOL 2: Critics' Choice – Top 100 Games Chosen By Media

COMING SOON

2013 VOL 1: The UK's best game studios

In association with

ukie

Contact **alex.boucher@intentmedia.co.uk** or call **+44 (0) 1992 535 647**
for advertising and sponsorship opportunities

CASE STUDY: KALYDO

A Kalydo-supported game undergoing playtesting (above), and Age of Wonders III (right)

CONSIDERING THE RELATIVELY small size of the Dutch games sector, which employed some 3000 people in 2012, the nation has an abundance of service providers and tech companies.

One of those is Kalydo, which offers a cloud gaming technology and platform based on file content streaming for PC and browsers.

Having already ranked up 150 million play sessions served in over 15 countries worldwide, Kalydo offers MMO publishers 'instant playability' for any kind of title accessed from either the desktop or browser. Furthermore, Kalydo offers its partners a tailoured analytics system, used to measure the conversion funnel from numerous perspectives, both in and outside of a given game. What's more, Kalydo-supported games can be ported in the browser to any social network, from Facebook to Kongregate.

Based in Eindhoven, Kalydo sprung into life in 2006 and today counts Cartoon Network, Gameforge, COG, Chiyu, Gamigo and Gravity amongst its clients.

And like many of his colleagues and peers, Kalydo's strategic director Richard van Barneveld is confident the Netherlands has the industry foundation needed to maintain an ever-growing business.

"The strongest competence of the Dutch game industry is facilitating game developers and publishers around the globe to become successful," he says. "For example, the Kalydo Cloud gaming team – initially started as development studio – has made it their mission to aid game publishers and help developers improve the user experience and increase conversion rates."

But why is the Netherlands so competent with the provision of service and technology for games makers? Van Barneveld believes he has the answer.

"There are several reasons why Kalydo and many other Dutch companies are strong at game services. First, we are a small country with a long trading and distribution history, we speak the most languages in Europe and enjoy the most trading agreements with countries around the globe with interesting tax rates," he states. "Secondly, The Netherlands has one of the best broadband infrastructures, next to Korea."

Meanwhile, according to the Kalydo CEO Doki Tops, it is a national sense of collaboration that has got the specialist and its contemporaries where they are today in the business.

"The Netherlands is a small country, so splitting ourselves up into smaller entities is crazy," insists Tops. "Internationally we collaborate with everyone and internally we split up. I love what Nordic Games has achieved; a big presence for companies from different nations. My dream is that Belgium,the Netherlands and Luxembourg will do the same.

"We started the EU for crying out loud," he concludes with a smile.

Kalydo welcomes developers to meet with it at this month's Develop in Brighton Conference, where free trials of the company's Beta will be available.

www.kalydo.com

"Another interesting problem we're facing is the amount of students graduating from game-oriented education," adds Digital Dream's Bink. "Since the games industry became hot four-to-five years ago, a lot of schools have jumped on the bandwagon."

> ***"The Dutch games industry has seen great support in form of investment in specialised colleges."***
>
> Lennart Sas, Triumph Studios

Bink and his colleagues are now seeing the first students to emerge from these new courses to enter the jobs market in a sector that's still establishing its national foothold.

"The older companies are able to support only a small percentage of these aspiring game developers; the others need to look for a job abroad, or create them themselves," says Bink.

But institutions recognising the games development business is by no means a bad thing in every case, and while opinion is divided, many point to the involvement of government, trade bodies and educators in the sector as an increasingly positive influence.

"The Dutch games industry has seen great support in form of investment in specialised colleges and courses," offers Sas of Triumph Studios. "I think that schools like NHTV in Breda and HKU in Utrecht belong to some of the best game schools in Europe. More so than film and TV, the games industry is also able to benefit from innovation and subsidies, which are mostly tech focused. We shouldn't complain, really."

Furthermore, there has been a substantial effort on behalf of Dutch games companies in the country to gain government support, as the DGA's Bouman highlights.

"More and more the lobbying of the Dutch Games Association seems to be paying off. We are now recognised as a key growth market by our government, and we're working together to find out ways to further unleash our potential. Comparing our sector to the film industry here is difficult; that sector is used to getting support for their productions because of the relatively small local market they're operating in, and the cultural value they represent."

As it stands, today the Dutch government today supports games developers by recognising them in a broad creative sectors category, and as such, studios must work hard to stand out among television, film and other established industries.

"The games development sector doesn't get the same recognition as we see with the TV and film sector," suggests DDM's de Koning. "It's still a fairly new industry for the government and/or financial institutions. That makes it difficult to get financial support that other sectors do have."

"The information I have is that most, if not all, government support for the creative and games industry has stopped here, making it ever more challenging for young Dutch game companies to make a mark in the international market," adds Kalydo's Tops. "Powering that from your garage is very, very difficult.

"Social media and video conferencing are nice, but face-to-face contact with potential business partners is still the key in this business."

But is government support through funding even relevant? Not everybody in the Dutch games space thinks so.

"I don't know any good examples of titles that have been enabled by government funds," says Guerrilla's Hulst, who's own first-party studio is funded by Sony.

"I don't think that 'game funds' is an effective way to encourage the growth of the industry anyway. All the local success stories are self-funded, privately funded or publisher funded."

LOOKING FORWARD

However various parties feel about such support, where most do agree is in believing that the Netherlands games industry has good times to look forward to.

> ***"The industry here now feels like a bubbling cauldron spawning smaller companies that do things their own way, outside of established channels."***
>
> Lennart Sas, Triumph Studios

"With an increasingly promising output by game design studies, new development studios and young indies are receiving worldwide attention," says Dutch Game Garden's van Best.

"Vlambeer releasing *Luftrausers* on Vita, Abbey Games getting high marks for god game *Reus*; we believe in a bright future for the Dutch games industry."

Kalydo's Tops is more measured in his perspective, but remains confident that if he and his contemporaries focus their resources and skills, then the Netherlands can become a bigger cultural and economic force with regard to games development.

"Concept and IP development is a good strength in Holland," he asserts.

"Big game development isn't, so finding a way to collaborate more and better with other outsource countries with big development experiences and adding our conceptual power is something that can grow our industry. Also the services and technology sector is something we excel in."

Ultimately, it appears that those that make up the Dutch development sector know where the responsibility lies in terms of moving forward. As Brightling's Maathuis offers in conclusion, it is the studios, tech outfits and service companies that call the Netherlands a home that must together proppel themselves further into the limelight, ultimately striving to take a stage with the likes of Montreal.

"The future lies with us," he says. "As long as we like to outperform the expectations of our customers, listen carefully to people around us and hold steady the course we aim for, we will get there."

And with that clsing comment, the Netherlands' games makers must all return to their work, developing games of every size and building a collective contribution to the global industry. ■

Top-to-bottom: Albert-Jan Pomper of Ranj Serious Games, Sicco Maathuis of Brightling and Thijmen Bink of Digital Dreams

09 - 11 JULY 2013

develop in brighton

insight • inspiration • networking

Don't Miss the Biggest Event for Developers in Europe

Join over 1600 international game developers for 100 top-notch sessions and great networking across 3 inspiring days.

Tuesday 9 July

EVOLVE

Exploring new platforms, new technologies, new markets and new business models.

Speakers include Square Enix, Papaya Mobile, fish in a bottle, Supermassive Games, Amazon, Jagex, Bossa Studios.

Wednesday 10 & Thursday 11 July

DEVELOP

Tackling key issues, tools, tricks and techniques of game development and offering practical advice and solutions.

ART · AUDIO · BUSINESS · CODING · DESIGN · PRODUCTION

Wednesday 10 & Thursday 11 July

indie

Indie Dev Marketing and Indie Dev Day conferences plus the Indie Dev Showcase.

Speakers include Dlala Studios, The Chinese Room, Born Ready Games, Simteractive, Grey Alien games, I Fight Bears

Sponsored by unity

Thursday 11 July

AUDIO

A day of sessions dedicated to game audio and music – a practical programme with world-class speakers.

Speakers include Magicbrew, Sony Computer Entertainment, Ninja Theory, IO Interactive,Microsoft

Sponsored by audiokinetic

Expo

Free for all visitors to attend and brings together some of Europe's most innovative companies from every sector of games development.Come and meet: **ARM, Audiokinetic, Centre for Digital, Codeplay, Dolby, Epic Games, Flaming Pumpkin Studios, Future, Game in Scotland, Kalydo, King, Kingston University, Microsoft, Nintendo of Europe, One Thumb Mobile, Outplay, Peer One Hosting, Perforce, Reflections a Ubisoft Studio, Reloaded Productions, TalentScotland, Unreal Engine, Valve, Wellcome Trust, Unity, YoYo Games**

Sponsored by UNREAL ENGINE

At the heart of the Expo is the **Develop Bar & Networking Lounge** so you can buy colleagues a drink, have an informal meeting or just mix with other visitors.

And don't miss the Booth Crawl for a beer on us on Wednesday at 5pm!

www.developconference.com

Sponsor: Microsoft · Sponsor: Sony Computer Entertainment · Sponsor: King · Sponsor: Unreal Engine · Sponsor: unity · Sponsor: Dolby · Audio Track Sponsor: audiokinetic · International Media Partner: develop · Media Partner: gamesindustry.biz · Media Partner: EDGE

KEYNOTE

The Develop Conference Opening Keynote

Changing the Game: Developing into the Next Generation
Mark Cerny, Lead System Architect on PlayStation 4
Industry legend Mark Cerny will use this year's keynote address at the Develop Conference in Brighton to take delegates through his vision for the future of game development.

Our Track Keynotes

EVOLVE

London Calling: 'Beyond the Box' in Connected Entertainment
Lee Schuneman, Microsoft Lift London

INDIE

The Room With a View
Barry Meade,Fireproof Studios

AUDIO

Audio Keynote 2013
Mark Yeend, Microsoft Studios

BUSINESS

Things That Make You Go MMM: Successful Massively Multiplayer Monetisation
Jeremy Gaffney, Carbine Studios

CODING

Conversation with Tim Sweeney
Tim Sweeney, Epic Games

PRODUCTION

Production Keynote
Nathan Martz, Double Fine Productions

After Hours

Tuesday 9 July

Ice Breaker Welcome Drinks from 6pm

Sponsored by UNREAL ENGINE

The Develop Conference Poker Tournament in aid of GamesAid, at The Grosvenor G Casino from 8pm

Wednesday 10 July

Develop Expo Booth Crawl from 5pm

Develop Industry Excellence Awards organised by Intent Media from 7.00pm

develop

The official Develop Awards after-party hosted by Eurogamer.net and GamesIndustry.biz

Thursday 11 July

Close of Conference Beers from 6pm

Sponsored by DOLBY

Here are just some of the companies that will be there – make sure you are too!

AI Factory • Amazon • AMD • Audiokinetic • Babel • Big Bit • Big Fish • Boing Splash • Born Ready • Boss Alien • Brave Games • Carallon • Carbine • CCP Games • Codeplay Software • Creatives in the Attic • Crytek • Darren Barnett Productions • Datascope Recruitment • Deloitte • Dlala Studios • Dolby • Double Fine • Dreadnought Studios • Eidolon Studios • EVIL27 Games • Everyplay • Exient • Exit Games • Exobyte • fish in a bottle • Fireproof Studios • First Touch Games • Flaming Pumpkin Studios • Four Door Lemon • Game in Scotland • Grey Alien Games • Grumpy Ferret • GSM Productions • Harbottle & Lewis • Horizon Studios • Hotsauce Interactive • I Fight Bears • IO Interactive • Imagination Technologies • Innogames • Intel • Intelligent Artefacts, Interactive Studio Management • Into Mania • Jagex • Kinesthetic Games • Kingston University • Kotori Studios • Kuju Entertainment • Lift London • Littleloud • Lowrider Sound • Magicbrew • Makielab • Marmalade • Matmi • Max Bowser • Mediatonic • Microsoft • Middlesex University • Mind Candy • Mindflock • Multiplay • NHTV • Breda University • Nice Face Games • Ninja Theory • Nintendo of Europe • Opposable Games • Papaya Mobile • Peer One Hosting • Perforce Software • Playjam • Positech Games • Razor Sharp Studios • Red Phantom Games • Reed Technology • Reflections • Remode • Robot • Overlord Games • Rodeo Games • Sega Europe • Serco • Shadowpuma Games • Simteractive • Solutions Recruitment • Sony Computer Entertainment • Southampton Solent University • sprogglers.com • Sprung Studios • Spry Fox • Square Enix • Storybricks • Sumo Digital • Supermassive Games • Team17 Digital • TesTime • The Chinese Room • The Coding Cat • thesoundofmalin • Ubisoft • UKTI • Unity • UOL • Valve • Warner Brothers • Wellcome Trust • Wish Studios • Worthington Sharpe • Xiotex Studios • YoYo Games • Zatzu Media... **And many more…**

Media Partner: POCKET GAMER.biz · GAMASUTRA The Art & Business of Making Games · AUDIOMEDIA · gamedev.net
Partner: GAMEREPUBLIC · TIGA · igda · ukie
Organised by: tandem events

BAFTA's independent thought

As the academy launches a new coding contest for Welsh indies with Microsoft, **Will Freeman** takes a look at the charity's support for smaller studios

Top-to-bottom: Marmalade CEO and BAFTA Games Committee chair Harvey Elliott and Dewi Vaughan Owen, chair of BAFTA Wales. Main image: The Wales Games Development Show in full swing

FOR MANY YEARS, BAFTA has supported video games.

Actually a charity, the UK academy for the promotion and development of the film, television and games industries is most famous for it's annual awards for the greats of the silver screen and its smaller cousin.

The ceremony is draped in glamour and sophistication, and such is its fame that it makes it easy to assume BAFTA's work is all about red carpets and big-budget releases.

The reality is much different, and across film and games the work of UK indies of every kind is a core concern to the academy. The reason is obvious; in the UK the role of independent studios past and present is arguably the foundation on which the sector is built on.

"BAFTA is constantly looking to ensure that the very best talent is recognised and showcased within its programmes, and the UK indie community has always been rich with creative excellence that deserves to be seen on a broader stage," says Harvey Elliott, BAFTA Games Committee chair and Marmalade CEO.

BIG THINGS FOR SMALL TEAMS

Indeed, BAFTA introduced the Debut Game category for the 2012 awards to recognise the smallest UK indies, and last year that category attracted 27 entrants from across the country.

"The new British Game award went to an indie team this year, showing a real support for the indie community from the BAFTA membership, and the ability of this community to compete on a global stage,"

> ***"BAFTA is constantly looking to ensure that the very best talent is recognised and showcased within its programmes."***
>
> Harvey Elliott, BAFTA

continues Elliott. "Our learning and events program puts the talent behind the games on a wider platform, allowing members and the industry as a whole to learn more about how specific games are developed, or the challenges the teams and individuals faced.

"As opposed to only showcasing the front-line triple-A titles, we are keen to showcase creativity wherever it comes from."

And it's that attitude that has seen BAFTA recognise not just the indies from the UK's hippest hubs, but also those fledgling studios in emerging regions, such as the one found in Wales. In a country famed for its rural vistas and industrial heritage, a new wave of independent games makers is now thriving, and BAFTA Wales is forging relationships with government, studios, trade bodies and tech giants like Microsoft to better the chances of games makers in the UK's westerly region.

"BAFTA in Wales are keen to promote our work in the games industry and an association with Microsoft enables us to reach new audiences with this message," explains Dewi Vaughan Owen, chair of BAFTA Wales, which was set up over 20 years ago. "As a charity, we are looking to encourage emerging talent to share their creativity and enthusiasm for the moving image industries and a competition of this nature would offer Microsoft an opportunity to support BAFTA's charitable endeavours."

BAFTA Young Games Designers is a good example of a nationwide project with a similar goal of encouraging young games enthusiasts to think about game design as a viable career and to make them aware of the opportunities available to them.

Welsh indies are well served not just by BAFTA, but also by a regional government that today recognises games development is a highly competitive and rapidly growing area of the local economy. And conveniently, that government offers financial support to Welsh based individuals and companies through its Digital Development Fund, including games developers.

"Our ambition is to help make Wales one of the best places in the UK to do games business and, as an academy, ensure that we recognise and celebrate the very best work of our emerging talent," says Vaughan Owen.

A UNITED EFFORT

Clearly, then, from Cardiff to London's Silicon Roundabout, via Scotland's numerous hubs, BAFTA is behind independent developers. But why do small studios even matter to the culturally weighty organisation?

"Unlike many industries, the UK indie community represents the heritage of games on a global stage," states Elliott. "The talent created here is disproportionately high versus other geographies, and it deserves to have a presence beyond just the games that it creates. In a small, resource constrained team, it is the talent and creativity that the individuals within it hold that makes the experience as rich as it is. To see these games compete head-to-head with those from the larger studios is a great reward of helping to surface this talent."

To put it another way, it's the same logic that has seen the wider BAFTA organisation push independent films to mainstream cinemas across the United Kingdom, and promote fresh productions across the television industry.

Looking forward, BAFTA has plenty else in place to support independent studios and start-ups beyond the new contest organised with Microsoft.

"Ultimately we want to ensure that there is a healthy and vibrant industry, creating excellence across the UK," concludes Elliott. "There will always be large studios drawing in and engaging great talent, but we mustn't lose sight of where the next generation of creators could come from.

"If we can help inform practitioners in the indie community on what happens in other parts of the industry, and inspire them with fresh ideas and approaches from beyond it, then we are playing a valuable role in ensuring that indies can continue to thrive."

www.bafta.org/games ■

COMPETITION TIME

Two Wales Games Development Show attendees get into the spirit of things

AS PART OF an on going commitment to start-ups and small studios, BAFTA Wales is hosting an exclusive Windows 8 games development competition. The British Academy Cymru Award for Games involves making a game for the Windows 8 Marketplace.

"The competition itself was launched at the presentation of the British Academy Cymru Award for Games on June 26th in the Wales Millennium Centre, Cardiff," explains Dewi Vaughan Owen, BAFTA Wales chair. "The Awards presentation – and competition launch – was a part of the Wales Games Development Show.

The App competition winner will then be awarded on September 29th at the champagne reception prior to the opening of the British Academy Cymru Awards."

To keep things simple, the rules and terms and conditions are the same whether you enter as an individual or a team. If entering as a team the maximum number of people allowed in any one team is five – including a team captain – and the majority of the team must be based in Wales.

The closing date for app publication to the UK Windows 8 Store is 6pm GMT on September 15th. All apps which are to be considered for the competition must be published to the UK Windows 8 Store no later than 6pm GMT on September 8th. Prizes will include Windows phone and Kinect devices.

A CREATIVE SPARK

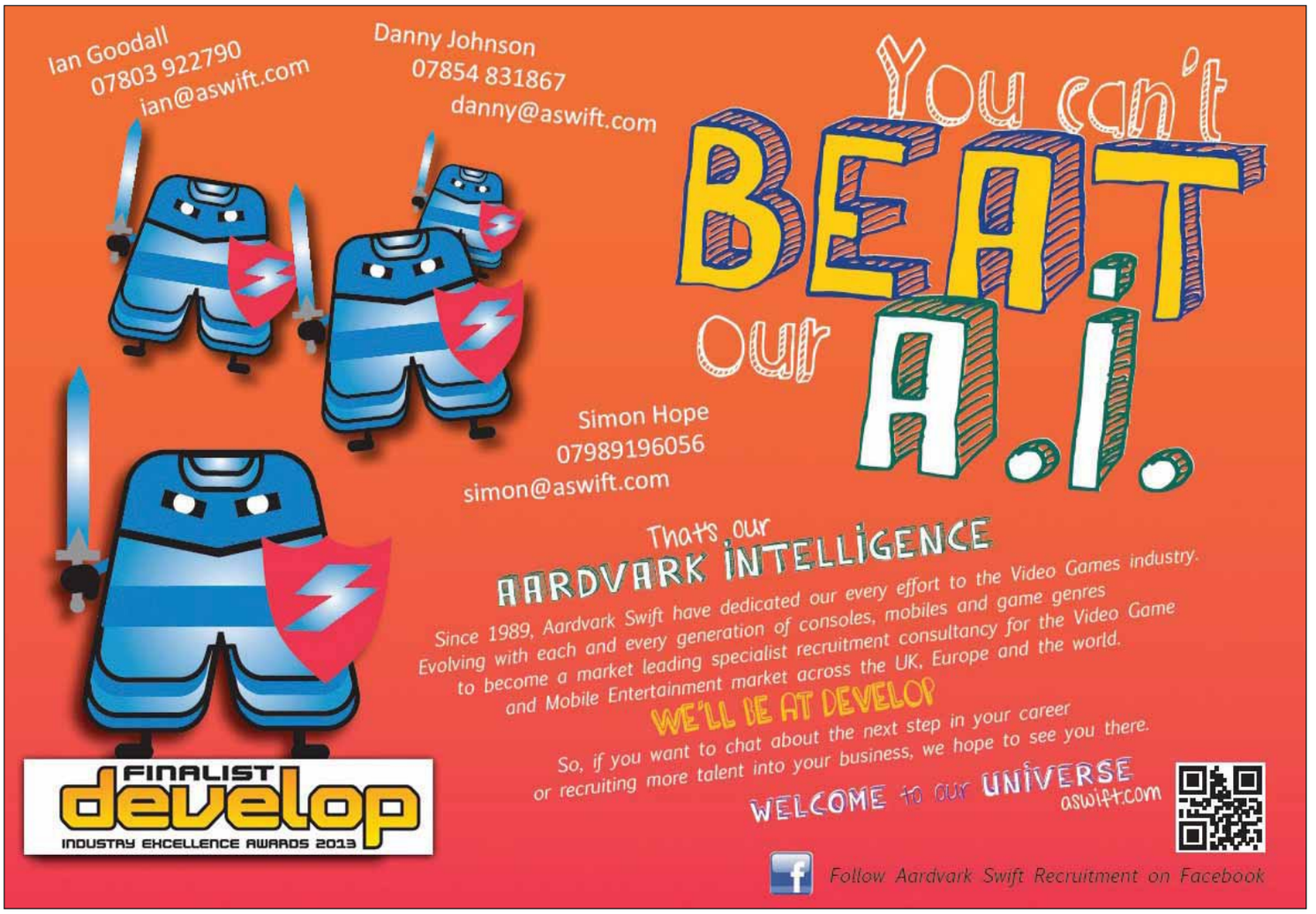
As part of its support for the contest, Microsoft is offering entrants access to it's DreamSpark and BizSpark initiatives, which serve student and start-up developers.

DreamSpark is a Microsoft programme that supports technical education by providing access to Microsoft software for learning, teaching and research purposes. DreamSpark is simple: it's all about giving students Microsoft professional-level developer and designer tools at no cost so that students can chase their dreams and create the next big breakthrough in technology – or just get a head start on their career. So, if you're a student go to DreamSpark's website to take advantage of all it has to offer.

Microsoft BizSpark is a global programme that helps software start-ups succeed by giving them access to software development tools, connecting them with key industry players, and providing marketing visibility. The programme also includes access to Windows Azure, a flexible, and powerful cloud platform for the creation of web applications and services. In addition, BizSpark offers technical support, business training and a network of over 2,000 partners to connect members with incubators, investors and more. Since it was established in 2008, more than 45,000 companies in over 100 countries have joined.

For more information and full terms and conditions of the competition, please visit **www.bafta.org/wales**.

Don't build a next-gen facial pipeline with last-gen technology. Find out why so many leading developers have switched to the industry's most productive solutions.
WWW.CUBICMOTION.COM
image courtesy of 3lateral.com


Ian Goodall
07803 922790
ian@aswift.com
Danny Johnson
07854 831867
danny@aswift.com
You can't
BEAT
our
A.I.
Simon Hope
07989196056
simon@aswift.com
That's our
AARDVARK INTELLIGENCE
Since 1989, Aardvark Swift have dedicated our every effort to the Video Games industry.
Evolving with each and every generation of consoles, mobiles and game genres
to become a market leading specialist recruitment consultancy for the Video Game
and Mobile Entertainment market across the UK, Europe and the world.
WE'LL BE AT DEVELOP
So, if you want to chat about the next step in your career
or recruiting more talent into your business, we hope to see you there.
WELCOME to our UNIVERSE
aswift.com
FINALIST
develop
INDUSTRY EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2013
Follow Aardvark Swift Recruitment on Facebook

Localisation translated

Localising a game to one language is enough of a challenge. **Jan Werkmeister**, business development director at Synthesis' German operation exposes the reality of tackling multiple languages simultaneously

MANAGING AND COORDINATING projects with multiple languages presents a myriad of potential issues for any localisation company.

"When it comes to multiple languages, full visibility and communication between the local departments and teams involved have some crucial advantages," says Emanuele Scichilone, project manager at Milan-headquartered localisation and translation outfit Synthesis. "When my work on a project begins, I first analyse the assets and clean them up. Once I have done that I share them along with all the instructions I would recommend for my own language to all other teams. This is valid both for the project kick-off, but also for the whole localisation process. When we spot a problem, we share this information with the project managers that coordinate each language team.

"This approach is also valid in the opposite direction: when any of the teams find a problem, they report it and their project manager shares it with my team," continues Scichilone. "This clearly is a great benefit because there are more chances to find and fix issues in advance. The internal harmonisation and communication process is a clear advantage of handling several languages with one vendor like Synthesis – single local vendors just can't share information easily. This working method is applied at all localisation stages; translation, all audio recordings phases and linguistic testing. It's not always easy, but that is a 'must do' for us."

HANDS ON LANGUAGE

This approach has not changed since the 1990s because still nothing is automated and no project is the same. It remains hands-on work and experience helps assess a project's needs.

"We require the game design document glossaries where we look at the language tone to be used, the characters relationships and so on. Some RPGs need to maintain some existing terminology (the *D&D* rule set, for instance), some games are IPs coming from known licenses as cartoons, comics, movies and some titles are set in fantasy or medieval time, etcetera. We can't use the same style everywhere. Quite simply, squires don't talk the same way as noblemen."

> ***"The most important aspects for triple-A localisation are organisation and coordination."***
>
> Emanuele Scichilone, Synthesis

Coping with, and planning, all the different assets for each project calls for a good organisation, as good organisation is the whole basis for consistent quality.

"The most important aspects for a successful triple-A localisation are organisation and coordination from the localisation provider, and an company with good source assets from the client side," offers Scichilone.

The workflows of today's blockbuster games have to be more advanced since their overall game content has grown. In addition, the team sizes grow and sharing information and keeping this information updated ensures a trouble free production.

"Using two of our recent projects as an example; *Skyrim* was over one million words to be translated, with over 700,000 words to be recorded, while *Dishonored* was actually about 90,000 words of recordings," continues Scichilone. "It's evident that for *Dishonored*, according to the schedule, we could use one translator – and one proof reader – for *Skyrim*. However, we needed to build teams of four-to-five translators, plus a dedicated reviewing team that could cope with such a big amount of words within the given schedule."

A GLOBAL MARKET

Good organisation and sharing information among teams becomes even more vital when it comes to localising a game into additional languages. As with other localisation providers, Synthesis is getting requests for more languages than just the classic FIGS.

"The FIGS countries are the most important countries in Europe, but I am seeing that with some of the eastern European countries like Poland and Russia where their games markets are growing, these languages are becoming required more and more often. Outside of Europe, publishers are now looking with interest to emerging markets, like Brazil, South America and Asia, with focus on China and Korea in particular" says Scichilone.

Arkane Studio's 2012 hit, Dishonored (above), was localised by Synthesis

Top-to-bottom: Synthesis' project manager Emanuele Scichilone and CEO Max Reynaud

However, Synthesis' workflow approach does not change when a client needs any additional language. As a client there is one point of contact – the project manager – and s/he coordinates the different territories.

"We have dedicated teams to cover all other European languages; Dutch, Nordics, Eastern European, Oriental and all Asian languages," continues Scichilone. "Once we have been asked even for Tagalog. Indeed, we also have to cope the different time zones, but we are pretty flexible and always try to match clients' needs."

A client requesting more languages as a result of the global publishing approach is just one of the many changes the localisation market is experiencing. Synthesis has consistently reacted to market developments in the past and it will do in the years to come.

TRANSLATING THE FUTURE

The most important aspect is keeping up with the quality standard for any new language, territory or workflow. The process of establishing and integrating new languages into the group's portfolio takes its time, so it's vitally important for any localisation provider to not only adapt to the current situation, but foresee future development of markets.

"We've been doing this job for so many years now, working on literally thousands of different projects on different platforms, from different developers with different issues, that we got to instinctively know what the client expects from us," explains Max Reynaud, Synthesis CEO and founder. "Our goal is to put all our knowledge and dedication at the client's disposal on a daily basis. This is what our oldest partners and clients have been experiencing over the last two decades and this is what every new client is going to receive from us. The market follows its own path and Synthesis adjusts to it. In doing this, we try to approach each new project with what we consider the best balance of assistance and proactivity."

Reynaud believes that the globalisation of game localisation has only just begun and that videogame publisher's demands will get even more global and comprehensive.

"I expect the market to progressively head towards global multitask vendor providers. It's like a circle; we started 20 years ago with multi-language providers which were not able to fully deliver on the expectations of the publishers, and this opened the doors to local agencies with a strong territorial positioning to flourish, as with Synthesis. At the same time, some publishers have been bringing in-house some key services, like QA."

And the challenges don't end there.

A TIME CRISIS

"The upcoming years won't be easy for the industry" Reynaud predicts. "I've been studying how the economic scenario has been unfolding over the last five years, and I'm getting more and more convinced that the current crisis will extend and will not hit just the 'weaker' countries like Greece, Spain or Italy but also central Europe and US in a way that few could expect at the moment, so clients and publishers will be looking to counter this by expanding into new territories and markets."

Synthesis will need to keep focusing on the reliability of the service it provides and take every opportunity coming.

"This is going to be one of the biggest challenges that Synthesis has faced and it is this direction where we're channeling all our efforts at the moment," confirms Reynaud.

Economic pressures also force clients to go for low-cost offers says Scichilone, who has seen a lot of these projects. But low-cost approaches seldom work well in the long-term.

"In the end many of those clients came back to us and asked for help with their localisation and then stayed with us for their upcoming projects," concludes Scichilone.

Maybe this is one of the aspects that drives Synthesis forward and makes clients stay working with the company over so many years: support and solving problems, even under difficult circumstances. ■

Jan Werkmeister is a partner and business development director at localisation specialist Synthesis. He is also the owner of Periscope Studio. **www.synthesis.co**

opm recruitment
programming
dev management
test and translate
commercial
creative

ukie
develop
OPM – AWARD NOMINEES EVERY YEAR SINCE 2004

No Lag.

Helping you keep pace with change.

The games industry moves quickly, it's possible that candidates who were strong last year may not be quite as relevant to a project the next.

This is why finding out what a candidate can do, and what they'd struggle with, can make an enormous difference. Sometimes it can be the difference between the success and failure of a project.

Often just a handful of people are right for the most highly skilled roles. Finding this talent requires a human touch and a deep understanding of the past, present and future of the games industry. When it comes to our candidates, we drill down surprisingly deeply into someone's skill set. We only send people who can do the job – we've yet to meet anyone who does business quite like us.

Visit our website or give us a call for an informal chat about your recruitment needs.

T: +44(0)1206 21 44 21 | www.opmjobs.com

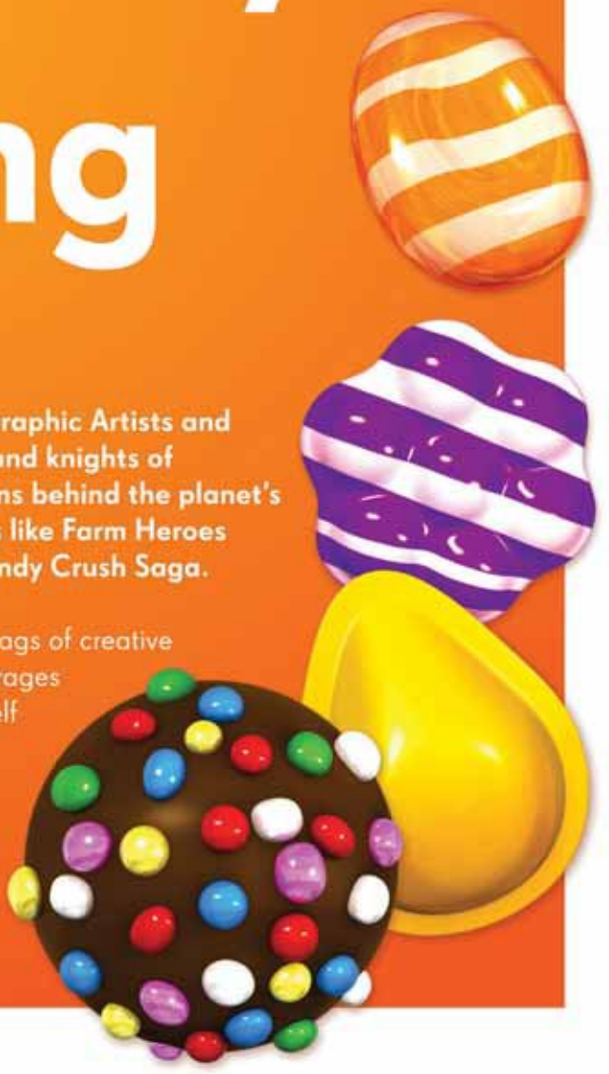
PLACING PROFESSIONAL PEOPLE IN PROFESSIONAL PLACES

King

Get treated like royalty at King

Here at King, we don't see Games Developers, Graphic Artists and Product Managers. We see developers of magic and knights of creativity. That's because our people are the brains behind the planet's most successful social and mobile games. Games like Farm Heroes Saga, Pet Rescue Saga and the world-famous Candy Crush Saga.

Working in tight-knit Agile teams, King people enjoy bags of creative freedom in an atmosphere that challenges and encourages in equal measure. Experience the adventure for yourself – head to Develop Brighton Expo stand B40 or visit king.com/jobs to learn more about creating awesome games in London or at one of other European studios.



THE DEVELOP QUIZ

Join us for the next quiz on

Wednesday September 18th

Headline Sponsor

Microsoft

Round Sponsor

ukie

CONGRATULATIONS!

May Develop Quiz Winners
Firefly Studios

SIGN UP NOW!

Entry for a team of five people is £249 and includes a free bar and food

For team places contact
kathryn.humphrey@intentmedia.co.uk
For sponsorship opportunities contact **alex.boucher@intentmedia.co.uk**

Teams signed up so far... Microsoft ukie creative personnel Datascope SIDE The Creative Assembly Firefly bossa studios

BUILD

THE LATEST TOOLS NEWS, TECH UPDATES & TUTORIALS

Inside data and analytics p53

Opening the Wii U

How does Nintendo's Web Framework change the Wii U offering, and just who is it for? p50

Profiled: Hansoft for Mac p60

Expendable: Rearmed heads to Nvidia Shield p64

Map data: ©2013 Google, Sanborn. Screenshot: ©2013 CyberCity 3D. Inc/ 3D Travel Inc., DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, U.S. Geological Survey, USGS

Inside the Web Framework

Since GDC, studios have been signing up to use Nintendo's Web Framework. But what does the development environment actually offer, and who is it for? **Will Freeman** gets the lowdown on the platform holder's new technology

Martin Buchholz (above), points to the Google-powered Wii Street U (main) as an example of the potential of Nintendo Web Framework

STUDIOS HAVE BEEN registering to use Nintendo's Web Framework since glimpsing the platform at GDC 2013. Martin Buchholz, manager of developer relations and support at Nintendo of Europe tells us more about it.

For our readers that don't know, what is Nintendo Web Framework?
Nintendo Web Framework is a development environment used to develop Wii U software with HTML5 and JavaScript. Nintendo Web Framework enables you to use a variety of the Wii U's unique features, including the Wii U GamePad, Miiverse, etcetera.

Why establish Nintendo Web Framework; is it about making the Wii U accessible to more developers?
Yes, originally the Wii U development environment required C or C++ knowledge, and now it's possible for developers to use HTML5 and JavaScript for Wii U software development as well. Therefore, with the Web Framework, more developers can create different types of software and release them at different price points; which allows users to enjoy a greater variety of new software.

Considering the languages the development environment supports, is it predominantly conceived as a platform for app and small game development?
No, as mentioned previously, we expect that the additional development languages will increase the number of new Wii U developers who haven't worked with Nintendo before, resulting in new types of games and services. One example of this is *Wii Street U* powered by Google, which was created using Nintendo Web Framework (*see image, above*).
By using the GamePad's motion sensors it's possible to enjoy a 360-degree view by moving the controller, so this example demonstrates how you can create new user experiences by utilising two screens: TV Screen and the second screen on the Wii U GamePad. *Wii Street U* is currently available free of charge from the eShop, so you can give it a try.

> ***"Web Framework is a development environment used to develop Wii U software with HTML5 and JavaScript."***
>
> Martin Buchholz, Nintendo

Unity's support for Wii U also opens the doors of Wii U development to more developers. What distinguishes what Nintendo Web Framework offers from what Unity for Wii U offers?
Unity is a game development environment with a 3D game engine at its core, which is used by many developers all over the world. Nintendo Web Framework was developed to run content created with HTML 5 and JavaScript. As each environment has its own strengths in terms of technology, developers can pick the environment which best fits their needs.

Would you be able to spotlight some features the Nintendo Web Framework that the team behind it are most proud of?
Nintendo Web Framework can use Wii U's standard features via JavaScript extension by

Nintendo Web Framework can use Wii U's standard features via JavaScript extension to output to the Wii U GamePad (above), as well as other devices

default. Needless to say, output to the Wii U GamePad, and input from its devices, like the accelerometer and gyro sensor, are supported as well.

Web Framework also supports Miiverse, which is an interface allowing you to share your game experiences with people all over the world in various ways whilst playing games.

Indies and small studios sometimes believe the Wii U is a platform relatively closed off to smaller teams. Is it fair to say Nintendo Web Framework makes the platform more open than ever?
Nintendo is improving in various aspects to allow access to Wii U software development for indies, and small development studios. This time, Nintendo Web Framework makes the platform more accessible from a technical standpoint, so we hope that many more developers become involved with Wii U software development.

As Web Framework potentially diversifies the range of studios making games for Wii U, can you see the console starting to appeal to even more different audiences?
We can't say anything at the moment, as no software built with Nintendo Web Framework has been sold yet.

Of course, we do believe that there is such a possibility.

> ***"Web Framework makes the platform more accessible from a technical standpoint, so we hope that many more developers become involved with Wii U."***
>
> Martin Buchholz, Nintendo

How do developers interested in the Nintendo Web Framework apply to gain access? Is that process relatively easily and welcoming?
Developers can apply at **wiiu-developers.nintendo.com** to register their interest. After submitting the form, a member of staff from Nintendo will get in touch with the developer regarding additional details, such as signing a platform NDA.

What support from Nintendo – beyond the provision of the Nintendo Web Framework itself – will the development environment's users receive?
We have a support contact for developers, who you can freely contact with your enquiries. We support all types of enquiries, whether it is how to use the development kit, or about software packages needed, or anything else.

Did you have a message for developers considering embracing or using the Nintendo Web Framework?
I want to encourage developers to get in contact with Nintendo and give feedback, especially if you're new to working on a Nintendo console. We are keen to get any feedback from developers: whether you're creating a game or application and have comments, or if you want to request more technical features. ■
wiiu-developers.nintendo.com

wave®

Sound Design and Audio Post Production

FINALIST

develop

INDUSTRY EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2013

Dabbling with data

Acting on data can help bring more new players to your game and help up the production quality throughout. **Aaron Lee** finds out what data analytics can do for your studio

GOOD DATA. BAD data. Big data. In today's connected age, data is the buzzword that's being bandided around from engineering to politics and everything in between.

Knowing how to actually get at it and, more importantly, what you can take from it, is what's desired.

Tracking and monitoring is something that is becoming more frequent in our culture, and it's something that isn't always welcomed. But, what if your journey time across a busy city on public transport could be reduced by ten per cent? That could be the difference between having to make a mad dash straight from your desk to catch the bus that will arrive in time for your connecting train. This is precisely what a team of IBM researchers did in the Ivory Coast by monitoring mobile phone data. Recognising tangible benefits can dispel reservations about technology invading privacy. Data can be taxing. Data can be tiring. And data it can be outright addictive.

When it comes to games, pretty much anything can be tracked to some degree. Nowadays, telemetry is being used to inform game design long before a game comes out. But for developers, on the face of it, the cost and resource requirements for data collection and analysis appear too heavy for the benefits they could produce. Whether you are creating social games, mobile games or full-fat console titles, data and analytics are becoming a bigger part of the development process, and they need to be understood.

DATA DELUGE

"So many of the developers that we speak with are finding it very difficult to skill-up and to invest the resources, time and money into really getting to grips with generating and leveraging actionable insights through analytics," Clemens Wangerin, co-founder of analytics firm Setgo, tells *Develop*. "A lot of that stems from the fact that they have other priorities, as many developers are seriously struggling with the notion of discovery for their titles in the digital world much more than they are with understanding their audience."

> ***"As mobile games move heavily towards the freemium model, the use of analytics is becoming more and more important."***
>
> James Kaye, Dimoso

Where data first started to get noticed in the games was in social space. Early adopters such as Zynga and Playfish made huge gains thanks to acting on the information they collect, and making incremental adjustments to retain more players as well as adopting mischievous methods of attracting new users. And now the focus is on mobile, though even in this area things aren't moving as quickly as some would wish.

"As mobile games move heavily towards the freemium model, the use of analytics is becoming more and more important. VisionMobile's recent study 'Developer Economics 2013' found that user analytics are used only by about 28 per cent of developers in mobile apps, which is still pretty low," says James Kaye, director of Dimoso, an integrated marketing and PR agency that specialises in digital, mobile and social.

Kaye explains that analytics in the mobile games industry can really be split into two halves: the app stores (Apple, Google, Amazon and so on) and the data analysers, the third-party firms that supply data services to developers.

And Kaye believes that where data's potential is going unused is with smaller mobile developers, who are in need of guidance.

"The biggest disadvantage now is not 'design by data' but the fact that small and medium mobile game developers may not have the skills to properly analyse and interpret the data they have in order to introduce new features or make key design changes" he says. "Whilst many of the large and sophisticated mobile publishers may have the skills and knowhow to create 'funnels' and 'events' in Flurry Analytics [a popular free-to-use analytics tools for mobile apps] and extract maximum insight, smaller developers are still in the dark. Rather than be analysts and marketers, all they want to do is make a good game."

Collecting and analysing data is one form of actively 'listening' to your audience, says Clemens Wangerin of UK analytics firm Setgo

FOUR TOP DATA TIPS

Data firms provide you with some must-know insight to consider when getting into the data analytics circuit

BALANCE
"Getting the balance right is essential. If you collect too little data then you will not get value from your analytics. If you collect too much then you will become overwhelmed. So when configuring event collection, think if the data will allow you to change the game. Collect mission outcomes, but perhaps not every aspect of the gameplay during the mission. There are perhaps 20-to-30 different event types. But collecting the player status alongside the events is vital."
Mark Robinson, COO, GamesAnalytics

START SMALL
"Tracking data is an art. We recommend starting small with a stage of the game, and focusing on user acquisition events to begin with. Later, developers would be more interested in engagement and monetisation data. In the Claritics system, you don't have to start with collecting all the data and you can dynamically add more events data as games are being played."
Raj Pai, CEO and founder, Claritics

USER ACQUISITION
"As a game developer, you don't need a lot of information to successfully manage your user acquisition campaigns. It's vital to be able to differentiate traffic sources via sub channel IDs. Then you want to track registration, activation and payment events, and ideally be able to share these in real-time with your user acquisition partners. This allows for fast traffic optimisation, which means you end up with more paying users for less marketing money spent."
David Mohr, Head of Games, GameGenetics

FOCUS
"Most importantly, pick one thing you want to improve at any one time. Do not attempt to tackle several things at once, as you will not be able to discern what exactly produced the change in results. There's a lot of trial and error involved in the early stages, where a change you have made to a game produces a result that's worse than previously – in that case, roll back your change and try another angle."
Clemens Wangerin, Co-Founder, Setgo

Top-to-bottom: Marcos Sanchez of App Annie and James Kaye of Dimoso

MAKING DATA WORK FOR YOU

There are few developers in the mobile space or elsewhere that would disagree with Kaye's view about wanting to produce the fun before anything else.

Mark Robinson is COO of GamesAnalytics, which aims to provide games developers with better tools to understand the types of players that are playing their game. It offers services such as Engage, which provides intelligent messaging based on scoring players in real-time into treatment groups for targeted messages to be delivered in the game. In other words, this means the aggressive players get the ammo packs, while impatient players gets boosters.

Robinson says it is all about understanding player behaviour and personalising the experience. Its service displays data to users in the form of dashboard diagrams, which show you game performance, retention and monetisation rates. But deeper analytics are needed in order to understand why and when players are leaving, or, on the other hand, why they're buying. Using its technology to gain an insight into players actions, GamesAnalytics claims to have increased retention rates by 50-to-70 per cent and revenues by 20-to-30 per cent for developers its worked with.

"In a recent collaboration we analysed the game economy to understand how the reward structures where affecting engagement in a deathmatch game," Robinson explains. "We found that aggressive players who had high death rates were being very well rewarded; whereas more expert players who had better outcomes had high defection rates as the reward system was not orientated towards this behaviour.

"By balancing the rewards mechanic across different player segments we were able to dramatically increase retention in the expert players and also monetise persistent and aggressive players at higher levels. Making sure the grind economy is well balanced against real money economy is one of the most important design features that analytics can fundamentally address."

Wangerin's company Setgo released Pingflux, a data analytics tools that enables you to see many events in many different contexts. For developers who use analytics, Wangerin says the advantage is that you are "listening" to what your audience does once they've brought the game.

"We always liken it to an entertainer who stands on stage and uses laughter and applause as a way of measuring how their material is going down with the crowd. In my mind, any game developer should be naturally curious about how people are playing their game, even if they do not intend to iterate on this particular title. It would still inform their thinking when they're designing their next game," he says.

While some companies focus on core game metrics, other, such as GameGenetics, are involved with player retention.

"The bottom line is that games developers nowadays need to heavily focus on increasing the cost-effectiveness of their marketing mix to survive and secure a competitive position in the long-run. This requires a thorough understanding of their game-specific tracking and conversion funnel, which is a core service offered by GameGenetics," says the company's head of games David Mohr.

A NUMBING EFFECT

Improvements to the overall quality of games is, or at least should be, what data analytics is about. However, criticisms levelled at the likes of Zynga and other companies that have made a name for themselves in the social and mobile space is that this is 'game design by numbers', readied, rinsed and repeated to unduly squeeze more cash out of the hands of consumers, even if it takes the creativity out of the craft.

We're seeing this more of late with freemium mobile games, which Kaye says have the danger to become "cynical money machines". For instance, the launch of *Real Racing 3* from EA saw a shift from *Real Racing 2*'s premium mode to freemium. The game was initially launched in Australia and New Zealand to test the payment model, which would have been driven by analytics. However, following the game's global launch it received damning reviews and caused uproar from it's the most vocal players, which is a sharp reminder why the freemium model can push things too far.

"This might be true to a certain extent when it comes to actual in-game metrics. There will always be a need to balance cold, hard data with the creative decisions of game makers. However, when it comes to metrics that

smart audio

New in version 2013.1

HDR Audio
Loudness Meters ITU B.S.1770-3 & EBU R.128
RMS, Peak & True Peak Metering
Audio Source Editing
And much more...

Wwise®

empowers audio creators

PROUD AUDIO SPONSOR

audiokinetic®

09-11 July 2013
develop in brighton
insight • inspiration • networking

Real Racing 3 (above) arguably became far too dependent on data, which resulted in a backlash from users over its controversial free-to-play business model

measure the success of external influences like marketing campaigns, smart analytics should be your top priority," offers Mohr.

But Setgo's Wangerin argues that this is an overly simplistic way to judge analytics, and is something that certainly isn't reflect of the companies at the forefront of the sector: "Analytics can be utilised in so many different ways that I don't think it's right to say that anyone who uses them operates in a 'developing by numbers' way. I actually think that's archaic thinking and does not reflect the sophistication of how the most successful developers make use of these tools. Your fundamental ideas and game design still need to be attractive, be fun to play and find an audience. Analytics won't help you with that – but if you get those things right, you certainly put yourself in a good position to 'tweak by numbers', which means you are able to make changes with a map and not blind, as you would without the insights data will provide."

Kaye agrees with Wangerin: "I can understand the sentiment, but would argue strongly that top earning freemium mobile games such as *CSR Racing*, *Hay Day*, *Clash of Clans* and *Subway Surfers* are very high quality titles to begin with – both in terms of their production values and their playability and design. These are games that have the X factor."

GOD IS IN THE DATA

Too much of anything can be a bad thing. But data and analytics have much to offer developers at a time when audiences are fragmenting and flitting between platforms so readily.

Names such as Supercell and King are currently riding high on their titles that have attracted the attention of millions of players. Part of their success comes from a judicious approach to data collection.

> ***"Your fundamental ideas and game design still need to be attractive and fun to play. Analytics won't help you with that."***
>
> Clemens Wangerin, Setgo

"For those who have been able to integrate analytics and data-driven thinking into their organisations, I think we'll continue to see a trend of utilising cluster analysis, user profiling and predictive analytics to drive commercial opportunities via direct-messaging and to help identify other ways to monetise the audience, perhaps outside the game," says Wangerin. "On the other end of the scale, where the more lightweight, casual users sit, I think it won't be long before we'll see a really simple, hosted analytics solution out there that will cover 95 per cent of the most common KPIs to developers at the click of a button, which delivers an almost instant health check of your game."

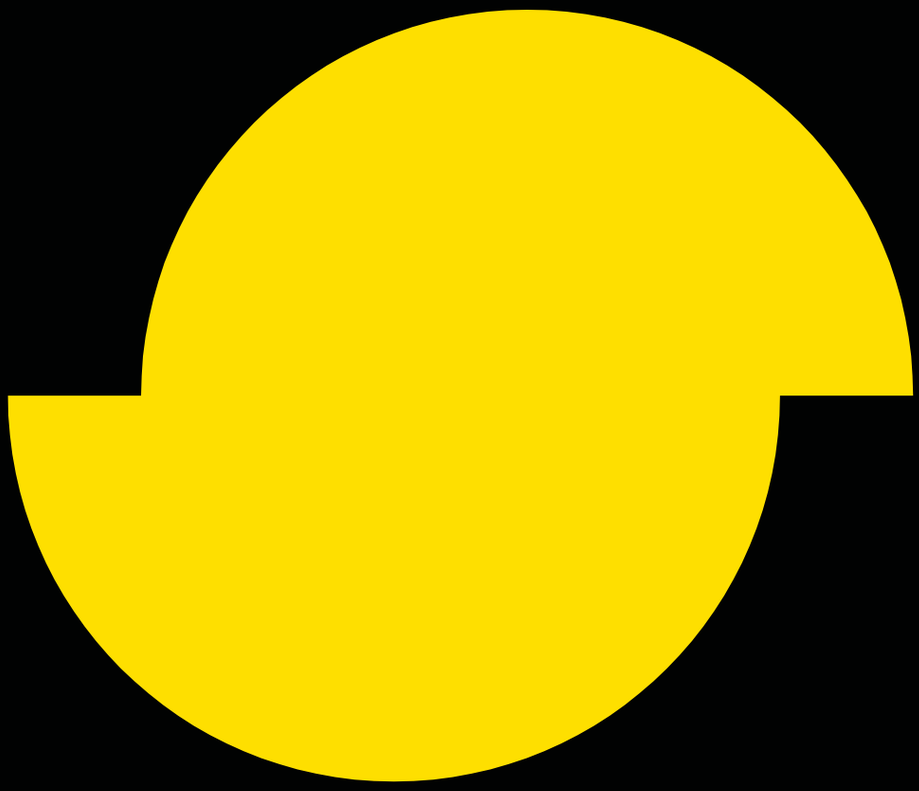
For the analytics specialists themselves, keeping up with developers needs means adapting their offerings, as Wangerin's Setgo has had to endure: "We launched Pingflux a while ago, which has seen some good initial uptake, but it's a pretty crowded space now. For many developers, the ones that are free to use are almost the default choice. The important thing is to start with identifying what questions you have and then looking at which solution will help you get those answers."

GameGenetic's Mohr is similarly resolute about how his firm can aid developers: "Our challenge is to educate and support our clients when it comes to tracking and improving their user acquisition campaigns. We try to integrate as closely as possible with our client's system, to ensure maximum efficiency and optimisation."

Even as the sector itself is become more competative, ultimately, it should lead to better exploration of how data and analytics can be used to improve games.

As Robinson concludes: "There are only opportunities to understand players better. This is a great position to be in and many other sectors would love to have this close relationship with their consumers. We are in a great place to use analytics to help deliver entertaining gaming experiences, but let's extract knowledge from the data that changes the game." ■

Automagic 3D Optimization



MeshLOD. ProxyLOD. BoneLOD. MaterialLOD.
Simplygon is the leading tool-chain middleware for automatic optimization of 3D-game content and Level of Detail. By replacing tedious and time-consuming manual work, Simplygon offers the benefits of LODs but without the drawbacks of increased production time and development cost.

www.simplygon.com

SIMPLYGON™

Simplygon is used by industry-leading developers including

AniPark, Avalanche Studios, Cryptic, CCP Games, Doobic Game Studios, Epic Games, Funcom, Giant Interactive, IMC Games, Nexon, Pearl Abyss, Piranha Games, Quantic Dream, RealU, RedGate Games, Reloaded Studios, Joymax, Neowiz, XLGames, Wemade Entertainment.

INTEGRATED PARTNER

Donya Labs, Simplygon and the Simplygon logo are all trademarks or registered trademarks of Donya Labs AB. All rights reserved. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.
Copyright © 2013 Donya

SOURCEB

CREATIVE & PROMOTIONAL SERVICES

Lick Creative
Tel: 0208 498 4000
www.lickcreative.com

an.x
Tel: 01722 420820
www.anxagency.com

Atomhawk Design
Tel: 0191 490 9160
www.atomhawk.com

Bastion
Tel: +44 (0)20 7269 7900
www.bastion.co.uk

Buzz
Tel: +61 3 8412 9000
www.buzzproducts.com

Studio Diva
Tel: 0117 214 0404
www.studiodiva.co.uk

Fink Creative
Tel: 01480 302350
www.finkcreative.com

Fluid
Tel: +44 (0)121 212 0121
www.fluidesign.co.uk

Frontroom
Tel: +44 (0)20 7729 3033
www.frontroom.com

Gem Creative
Tel: 01279 822 800
www.gem.co.uk/gemcreative

Indigo Pearl
Tel: +44 (0)20 8964 4545
www.indigopearl.com

Jellymedia
Tel: 01253 885581
www.jellymedia.com

Mi5 Communications
Tel: +46.708.257.876
www.mi5communications.com

OM
Tel: +44 20 7713 9000
www.omuk.com

Peppermint P
Tel: 0207 240 2645
www.peppermintp.com

Premier
Tel: +44 (0)207 292 8330
www.premiercomms.com

RealtimeUK
Tel: +44 (0)1772 682363
www.realtimeuk.com

Side and Sidelines
Tel: +44 (0)207 631 4800
www.side.coM
www.sidelinesagency.com

SJS LONDON
Tel: +44 20 7421 9400
www.sjslondon.com

Splatter Group
Tel: 01902 544154
www.splattergroup.co.uk

studio CO2
Tel: +44 (0)1483 414 415
www.studioco2.com

The Audio Guys
Tel: +44 (0) 1934 710024
www.theaudioguys.co.uk

Über
Tel: +44 (0)114 278 7100
www.uberagency.com

Wave Recording Studios
Tel: 020 7439 8080
www.wavestudios.co.uk

DIGITAL DISTRIBUTION

Atomblock
Tel: +31[0]24 6452544
www.atomblock.com

GAMING ACCESSORIES

Lygo International
Tel: 0191 230 6650
www.lygoworld.com

Performance Designed Products
Tel: +44 (0)1753 272120
www.pdp.com

Thrustmaster
Tel: 01932 577546
www.thrustmaster.com

INTERNATIONAL DISTRIBUTION

Click Entertainment
Tel: +44 (0)203 137 3781
www.click-entertainment.com

Curveball Leisure
Tel: +44 (0)1792 652521
www.curveball-leisure.com

Digicom Solutions
Tel: +44 (0)845 6344 256
www.digicomsolutions.biz

GameWorld
Tel: +31(0)10-2983838
www.gameworld.nl

Ideal Software
Tel: 01767 689720
www.idealsoftware.net

Koch Media Gmbh
Tel: +49 8924 2450
www.kochmedia.com
www.deepsilver.com

Link Distribution (UK)
Tel: +44 (0)1274 684 668
www.linkdistribution-uk.com

QVS (QV Software)
Tel: +61 2 9748 2555
www.qvsoftware.com.au

Ster Kinekor Entertainment
Tel: +27 11 445 7700
www.primedia.co.za

Vogue Distribution
Tel: +44 (0)1480 409256
www.voguedistribution.com

LEGAL SERVICES

Charles Russell LLP
Tel: +44 (0)20 7203 5000
www.charlesrussell.co.uk

Harbottle & Lewis LLP
Tel: +44 (0)20 7667 5000
www.harbottle.com

LOCALISATION, QA AND TESTING

Babel
Tel: 01273 764100
www.babelmedia.com

GlobalStep LLC
Tel: +44 (0)207 203 2000
www.globalstep.com

Testronic Labs
Tel: +44 (0) 2070 421 700
www.testroniclabs.com

Triple A Testing
Tel: +34 952 028 080
www.tripleAtesting.com

Universally Speaking
Tel: +44 (0) 1480 210621
www.usspeaking.com

VMC Game Labs
Tel: +44 (0) 1753 849 700
www.vmcgamelabs.com

MANUFACTURING SERVICES

OK Media
Tel: +44 (0)20 7688 6789
www.okmedia.biz

Sony DADC Austria AG
Tel: +43 (0)6246 880-0
www.sonydadc.com

MONETISATION AND PAYMENT

Adcash
Tel: +372 687 3002
http://www.adcash.com/

To list your company here and online every week

OOK

The essential guide to interactive entertainment agencies and service companies

NEW SECTION FOR 2013

arvato Entertainment Europe Sonopress GmbH
Tel: +49 (0) 5241 80 5690
www.fidelispay.net
www.arvato-entertainment.de

InComm Europe
Tel: 01489 556700
www.incomm-europe.com

RECRUITMENT
Aardvark Swift
Tel: 01709 834777
www.aswift.com

Amiqus
Tel: 01925 839700
www.amiqus.com

Avatar Games Recruitment
Tel: +44 (0) 1695 682 118 (UK)
1-855-AVATAR-2 (US)
www.avatar-games.co.uk

MPG Universal
Tel: 0844 800 9995
www.mpg-universal.com

OPM Response
Tel: +44 (0)1206 214421
www.opmjobs.com

Specialmove Consultancy
Tel: +44 (0)141 530 4555
www.specialmove.com

Wayforward Recruitment
Tel: London 020 7734 4664
Bristol 0117 966 6038
www.way-forward.com

REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS
gamecity:Hamburg
Tel: +49 40 22 70 19 - 41
www.gamecity-hamburg.com

SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT
Artery Studios
Tel: (+36) 20 5868 006
www.artery-studios.com

UK DISTRIBUTION AND LOGISTICS
CentreSoft
Tel: 0121 625 3388
www.centresoft.co.uk

Koch Media
Tel: 01256 385 200
www.kochmedia.co.uk
www.kochmedia.com

Realtime Distribution
Tel: 01480 435881
www.realtimeonline.co.uk

WEB SERVICES, CLOUD AND INFRASTRUCTURE
LeaseWeb
Tel:+31 20 316 2880
www.leaseweb.com

Announcing a new section showcasing games technology including tools, engines and development software

LAUNCHES JULY 26TH

Sourcebook is published with MCV plus selected reader codes of Develop and PCR

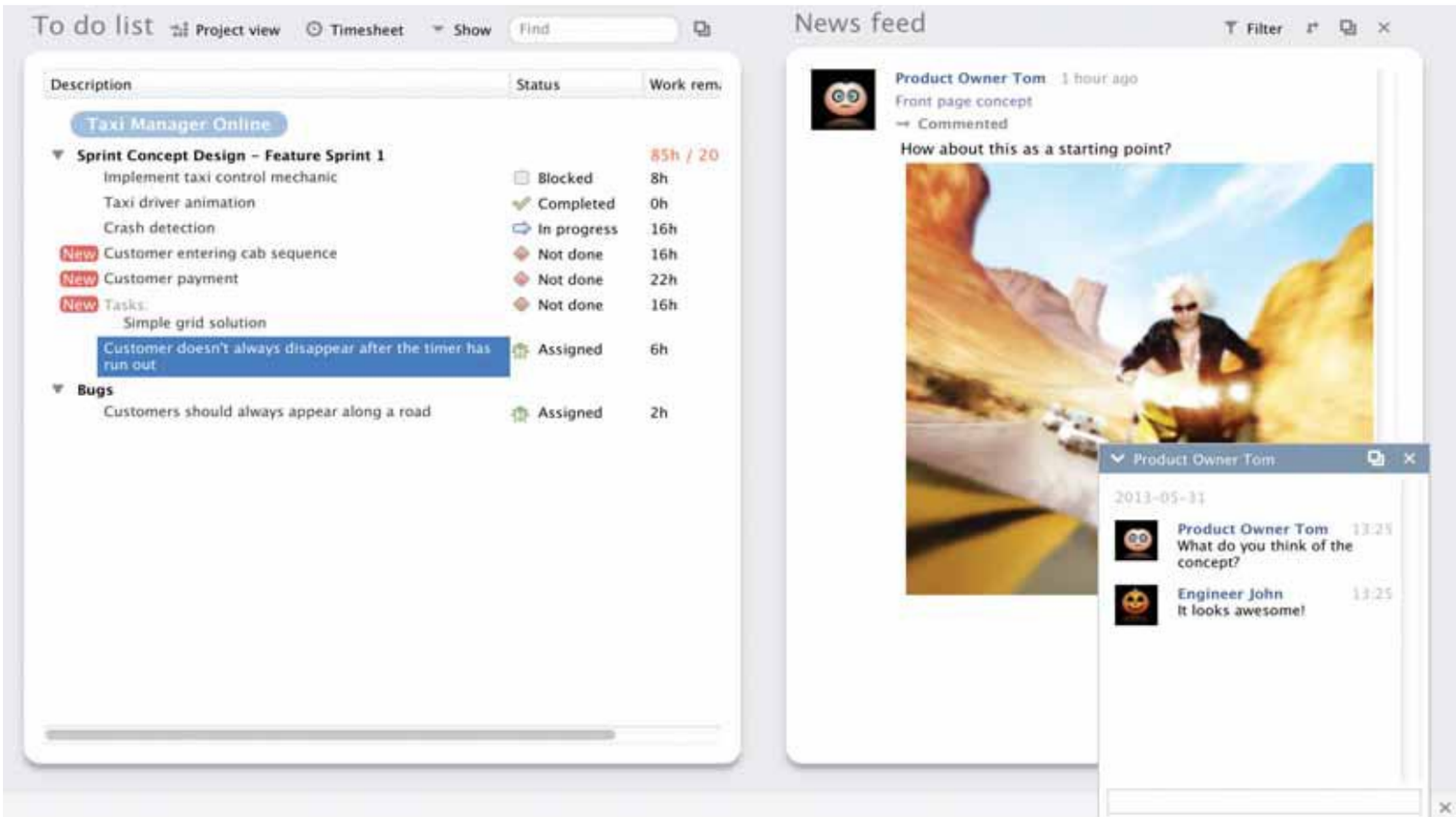
It will also be distributed at major events including Gamescom and the London Games Conference

please contact **Jennie.Lane@intentmedia.co.uk**

KEY RELEASE

Will Freeman considers the arrival of Hansoft's project management tech on Mac

What is it? A version of Hansoft's popular project management tool for Mac, designed to seamlessly integrate with the work of PC users
Company: Hansoft
www.hansoft.com/hansoft-7



Hansoft's Samuel Ranta-Eskola (above) says its project management tool for Mac is ready to met the demands of small studios

BACK WHEN HANSOFT officially went into business, games development and Macs shared, relatively at least, a long distance relationship with one another.

In 2005, iOS wasn't public and the social and gaming revolution was in fledgling form. Unity had only just launched, and quite simply, PCs remained the de facto standard for making games.

Over time that has changed, and today Macs stand as a significant cog in the machinery that is the global games development ecosystem. As a result, now Hansoft has moved to release its prolifically adopted project management tool for Mac.

"Hansoft 7.0, which was released last autumn, was a prelude to the Mac version," says Hansoft's senior production expert Samuel Ranta-Eskola of the process of the move to support Apple's computers. "In that release we re-wrote the whole interface to be more intuitive and fit better with OS X. We also enhanced the collaborative aspects of Hansoft, which fitted very well with the new interface. The underlying technology has also received a major face-lift to allow for a smooth experience no matter how big your game's project demands are."

TWO'S COMPANY

And so it is that today Hansoft supports both PC and Mac in union, offering effectively identical features on both, and letting teams that use both desktop platforms work towards the same servers and integrate workflows seamlessly.

But just because the PC and Mac builds of Hansoft 7.0 offer the same features, that doesn't mean the technology's creator isn't aware they may now be serving more diverse audiences, largely thanks to the number of smaller teams besotted by Mac.

"Macs are the dominant platform in casual studios," offers Ranta-Eskola on Hansoft's embracing of more diverse studio models with each new version. "We also see that more and more of the triple-A studios have a portion of Mac users. Nowadays, triple-A is not only about the console game; there are usually web and mobile products developed with the core game. The Mac version comes in handy to these teams as well, parts of your team could be working on the Mac and parts on PC against the same server."

> ***"Macs are the dominant platform in casual studios. We also see that more triple-A studios have a portion of Mac users."***
>
> Samuel Ranta-Eskola

Recently, Hansoft also introduced a new deal for teams requiring nine licences or less, that it has presented as a perfect partner for smaller studios looking to embrace the tool. 'Start-up License' lets teams with nine seats or less access the middleware for free.

"Many casual studios are small teams with small budgets, and they are often working on Macs," states Ranta-Eskola. "When you are that small you probably don't think that much about project management, but team sizes are growing very rapidly in this segment and with that come complexities that need to be managed.

"Hansoft can make a huge difference in making the expansion as painless as possible and we created the free Start-up License to allow small studios getting their processes right from the start. The Start-up License was a big hit from day one, and we expect a new wave of microstudios coming on board now when they can run Hansoft natively on Mac."

GIT TOGETHER

Also in parallel with the debut of Hansoft for Mac, the company is releasing a ready-made integration with Git, commonly used on Linux machines, in response to a growing demand from users, which will be accompanied by the unveiling of a Hansoft repository on Git-hub.

"Apart from that we are growing more than ever before with a sales office in San Francisco, a new partner program with re-sellers and integration partners around the world, and many new big in industries like telecoms, aerospace and space and electronics," concludes Ranta-Eskola. "It's really exciting to see how developers in other industries can learn from game developers, who are generally quite advanced when it comes to processes and agile methods." ■

MICROSOFT SPOTLIGHT

Nokia discusses helping indies like Rebellion succeed on Windows Phone, and the convergence of platforms and experiences from the front room to the smartphone

Judge Dredd vs Zombies
Developer: Rebellion
Who are they? An award-winning independent studio based in Oxford, UK
What is it? A *Judge Dredd* WP8 game that Nokia has helped promote for its mobiles
www.rebellion.co.uk

Nokia Lumia 925 (above), the latest flagship mobile from the firm, comes with a 4.5" PureMotion HD+ screen which truly brings gaming on Windows Phone to life

NOKIA WANTS TO give games developers a seamless route to market across its handsets and digital storefronts.

The handset manufacturer is actively reaching out to work with indies and established studios to bring their games to its Windows Phone-powered devices.

Rebellion is one of the studios Nokia has been working with closely.

"It wasn't long after the release of *Judge Dredd vs Zombies* on Windows Phone 8 that Carly [Wyatt] at Nokia sent a friendly email explaining that they wanted to help us promote our game to Lumia users," explains Rebellion's marketing coordinator Robbie Cooke. "They loved the game and were really impressed with the tech behind it. Even though we had previous experience developing games on other mobile platforms, it was really reassuring to have support like that because each mobile ecosystem – and their players – is so different."

CONNECTING PLAYERS

Understanding such ecosystems and how to get the best out of them for developer is the responsibility of Riaz Ahmed, Nokia UK's developer evangelist, and first point of contact for perspective studios.

"I am really excited about what we're bringing to the table for Windows Phone developers. Nokia, along with Microsoft, is committed to giving developers the tools, services and resources to help them bring their ideas to life on the Windows Phone ecosystem. With our Nokia Lumia smartphones combined with Microsoft's gaming heritage, we are bringing incredible gaming experiences, such as *Judge Dredd vs Zombies*, to our customers, across our entire portfolio of smartphones on a daily basis," says Ahmed.

Nokia assists developers with getting the word out about their mobile games. Promotion ranges from spotlighted or featured apps within the Windows Phone Store, up to game hub panoramas, or the main store panorama, with the biggest uplift in downloads coming from panorama slots. Initial promotion usually runs for a period of two-to-four weeks, and consists of a variety of slots. And additional promotions take place during seasonal occasions, such as Christmas, throughout the year.

> ***"Nokia, along with Microsoft, is committed to giving developers the tools to help them bring their ideas to life."***
>
> Riaz Ahmed, Nokia

For Rebellion, Cooke tells us, Nokia put together a two-month plan.

"They interviewed us and posted the story on their Nok Nok blog, promoted the app on their social media channels, provided us with art assets and Lumia chassis images to help show the game to our own followers. Most importantly, they co-ordinated a series of game spotlights and panoramas on the main and games hubs to get *Judge Dredd vs Zombies* get as much exposure as possible."

Nokia also pre-loads App Highlights (a discovery app) onto all Lumia devices in the UK and Ireland to help promote titles.

NEXT WITH NOKIA

"*Judge Dredd vs Zombies* had a definite boost in downloads," says Cooke, who's pleased with the support Rebellion received from Nokia. "Overall, our average daily downloads have increased since the campaign finished and we're confident that gamers on Windows Phone 8 who enjoy *Judge Dredd vs Zombies* are recommending the game to their friends because it's free to play – there's no risk, it looks fantastic and plays really smoothly."

And future advances also has Nokia excited about working with developers, as Ahmed confirms: "The idea of seamless integration and development of games and apps across Lumia, Windows and the wider Microsoft platform opportunity excites me even more.

"We are going to start to see a much deeper, richer and seamless integration with Windows Phone. With our partnership with Microsoft we'll be able to work with developers to bring best in class experiences for second screen apps running on Nokia Lumia smartphones."

But before that, Alex Bubb, Nokia's head of games partnering and marketing global, says that the firm is continually on the lookout for fresh, innovative new titles to bring excitement to its customers around the world: "*Judge Dredd vs Zombies* was a great example of where the quality of the title really has made an impact. We look forward to continuing to work with Rebellion and the rest of the UK indie community." ■

www.developer.nokia.com

Nokia's Alex Bubb (top) and Riaz Ahmed (middle), and Rebellion's Robbie Cooke (bottom) and its mobile game Judge Dredd vs Zombies (main)

UNREAL DIARIES

Epic looks back to a veteran of the Make Something Unreal dev contest

Tripwire Interactive President John Gibson (above) and his team were catapulted into business with the first Make Something Unreal contest more than a decade ago. Their game Rising Storm (above right), built with Unreal Engine 3, was recently released to critical acclaim.

EPIC GAMES RECENTLY crowned Dead Shark Triplepunch as the overall winner of Make Something Unreal Live 2013, a development contest in which their competitive multiplayer game *Epigenesis* proved to be a favorite of judges and consumers attending the Gadget Show Live.

To glance in the rearview mirror Epic caught up with a couple veterans of previous competitions to find out what they've been up to since earning their MSU stripes.

Naturally, the first stop was Tripwire Interactive, the talented folks who created the original *Red Orchestra* game as part of the $1 Million NVIDIA Make Something Unreal Contest. After picking up their Unreal Engine licences, the team built out the *Unreal Tournament 2004* mod into a full commercial release, and then grew their community with free content packs and an award-winning sequel. They also shipped *Killing Floor*, a co-op survival shooter which has also enjoyed a steady stream of add-on content.

CONDUCTING THE ORCHESTRA

Tripwire just released *Rising Storm*, the latest milestone in the *Red Orchestra* series, and *PC Gamer* magazine says the new game is "so absurdly fun." We asked Tripwire president John Gibson what keeps his team ticking.

"The Make Something Unreal Contest really helped us get our foot in the door, and starting out with a full Unreal Engine licence allowed us to realise our dream of turning our mod, *Red Orchestra*, into a full commercial release," said Gibson.

"As a company that develops military first-person shooters we realised very quickly that we had stepped into one of the most competitive genres out there. The great thing about using the engine is that it has allowed us to 'punch above our weight' when we are going head-to-head with the industry titans.

"This was really highlighted last year when *Red Orchestra 2* won the *PC Gamer* Multiplayer FPS of the Year award, beating out *Battlefield 3* and *Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 3*. Even though our competitors had teams 10-to-20 times our size, the Unreal Engine gave us the foundation to create something amazing even with a smaller team."

Tripwire has also used their commercial success as an opportunity to help up and coming developers. "We do a lot to foster modding for our games, including running mod competitions with cash prizes, and in some cases, shipping the modders' content as an official part of the game.

"This has allowed us to introduce the tools to a whole new generation of modders, and many Tripwire employees have come from the Unreal Engine mod community. With *Rising Storm* things have come full circle as the game was co-developed by Tripwire and a mod team that got their start making mods for our first commercial release. It hasn't been an easy path, but now ten years on from our mod beginnings, and with millions of sales under our belts, we hope that we can be an example to other teams to show that with hard work, determination and great tools like the Unreal Engine that anything is possible."

THE NEXT GENERATION

One such team that is learning this very lesson at the moment is Commando Kiwi, winner of Make Something Unreal Live 2012. Producer Jonny Robinson shared what has been keeping him busy since releasing *Fighting Fantasy: The Warlock of Firetop Mountain* for iOS.

"One of the biggest highlights for me is that I'm now working at Jagex as a community coordinator, and when I'm not at work, I'm still refining my Unreal Engine 3 skills for our new project, *Zenith*. All game studios use some sort of SDK and for me UE3 offers the fundamentals. I would strongly recommend to anyone with the passion for becoming a developer that they start with the Unreal Engine, as a good majority of studios look for expertise with it, plus it's a great laugh to play with. My advice to new developers would be this: the internet is your friend when it comes to studying new skills."

Indeed, those are wise words of advice coming from one of the industry's rising stars.

To download the free version of the Unreal Engine, visit **www.unrealengine.com/udk**. ■

UPCOMING EPIC ATTENDED EVENTS:

Develop Conference 2013
July 9th to 11th
Brighton, UK

SIGGRAPH 2013
July 21st to 25th
Anaheim, USA

GDC Europe and Gamescom
August 19th to 25th
Cologne, Germany

*Email **licensing@epicgames.com** for appointments and sign up for Epic's newsletter at unrealengine.com.*

Epic is hiring! To find out more visit: **epicgames.com/careers**

FOR MORE SUCCESS STORIES, VISIT: UNREALENGINE.COM/SHOWCASE

HEARD ABOUT

John Broomhall talks to Rebecca Parnell ahead of her Develop Conference audio session

Develop Conference 2013 – Audio Track
Date: Thursday, July 11th
Location: Brighton, UK
www.developconference.com

FOR ANYONE WISHING to bring some serious audio bang for buck to their projects, as well as use audio content as a neat and effective story-telling device, the use of acousmatic sound is a must.

Having players hear things they cannot see is an eternally excellent device for communicating additional contextual information, informing and enlarging the visual world, providing atmospherics, and of course, instructional and navigational information – all with little or no art requirement. The sound of a distant tolling bell, the unseen police helicopter, the ringing phone that nobody answers – all can have a profound psychological effect and useful storytelling function.

ACOUSMATIC FOR THE PEOPLE

Rebecca Parnell of audio production outfit Magicbrew is a keen advocate of acousmatic techniques and says that it's such a broad and interesting subject that she'll struggle to cover it all in one Develop Conference session. However, one area she promises to focus on is that of the disembodied voice.

"*Portal* is a fantastic example," she says. "The tannoy voice fulfils an important gameplay function, guiding the player, but also from the very beginning, it gives a hint of something dysfunctional about the character. Until *Portal* came along, the computerised, generic female voice, frequently used for things like tutorial training, had pretty much become cliché.

"*Portal*'s spin on it is superb, and using it as a smart device by which to unfold the plot and story, is very effective. In one of my own audio productions – *Joe Danger* – we were able to use tannoy voice to great effect. It was triggered by straightforward events like the game start, or when Joe does a big motorbike trick, or on the end of level scoreboard so not a big coding chore. Sitting nicely with the mix of race day atmospherics and crowd cheers it was a brilliant way of significantly ratcheting up the overall energy level in the game.

Parnell adds that she can't give a talk like hers without mentioning *BioShock*, which she feels has a very rich soundscape that ably creates a sense of the world. She argues that while you have the voice, you should also focus on lots of atmospherics – the choice of sounds, she states, can really draw players to certain areas – creating a lot of depth, a lot of history and a lot of backbone to the story – which should make a game world all the more believable.

"Another simple, small sound-based example from my own experience was designing the audio for a trap consisting of some nasty spikes that shot out the floor. That's what you see – but using additional sound effects content we described the sound of the working parts behind the scene that you don't see. Things like that add to the richness and depth of the aural experience."

BRIGHT ON IDEAS

According to Parnell, if you've got the bright ideas, there's very little standing in your way.

"I think it's just within the nature of game development to have an asset list which can be taken very literally. Naturally, the focus tends to fall on the obvious game objects and events that require sound. If you interact with something, you expect it to make a sound. Sometimes – especially with tight schedules – it can be hard to find time to step back and see the soundtrack as a whole and consider how these types of approaches can add value once you have those ideas. Demonstrating them to the team without too much input from them is straightforward enough now.

"Worst-case scenario? You can dub game play footage or if you're working with middleware tools, you can do an interactive mock-up. In my experience, even when working out of house, this has worked and the response has been generally really good."

The use of acousmatic sound in games continually presents an exciting non-technically challenging opportunity for creativity. In principle, it applies equally to iPhone or Xbox. In a coming world of next-gen where having as much sound as you need is not an issue, it's likely to be – along with well-executed implementation and polish – the power of sound ideas that produces the award-winners.

You can check out further information about Rebecca's talk and all of next month's Develop Audio Track sessions at **www.developconference.com** where the audio track will take place on Thursday, July 11th, 2013 at Brighton's Hilton Metropole. ■

John Broomhall is an independent audio director, consultant and content provider.
E: develop@johnbroomhall.co.uk
www.johnbroomhall.co.uk

Rebecca Parnell (above) of Magicbrew will be discussing acousmatic sound – which can be found in Joe Danger (main) – in her conference talk in Brighton

MADE WITH MARMALADE

When Phil Scott and his colleagues wanted to breathe life back into his classic PC and Dreamcast shooter, he turned to Marmalade and NVIDIA Shield

Expendable Rearmed
Developer: Retrobomb
Platform: Android, including NVIDIA Shield
Why Marmalade mattered: A classic PC and Dreamcast game headed for NVIDIA Shield with the help of Marmalade
www.retrobomb.co.uk

Expendable Rearmed (main image) running on Android, and its co-creator Phil Scott (above)

WHEN A GAMES journalist complained in the late nineties that game design briefs were becoming so elaborate they couldn't be detailed on a single Post-It note, Phil Scott rose to the challenge.

Back then he was a technology lead at Rage Software, and he knew he could defy that journalist's claim. The result was the PC and Dreamcast title *Millennium Solider: Expendable*, which began life with a handwritten line 'if it moves, shoot it, and if it doesn't, blow it up', penned, of course, on a small square of glue-backed paper.

Now, some 14 years later, the game is back, reworked and well-received on Android as *Expendable Rearmed*, and currently on its way to NVIDIA Shield – preloaded on the system at launch – as Scott and his colleagues at Retrobomb push the game to as many devices as possible. And the technology behind this return? Of course, it is Marmalade.

SWEET DREAMCASTS

"The game was always something that held a place in my heart, and it was the same for a couple of the other guys," says Scott of the decision to return to the original *Expendable*. "There's was a Dreamcast version done when we were at Rage; in fact it was one of the launch titles. Recently, somebody had done a comparison of the specs of the Dreamcast, which was a very powerful console at the time, but compared to modern phones, the phones looked more powerful. I was pretty impressed, and a back of an envelope calculation made me realise what we might be able to do. I wondered 'what if?' for a few months, and that escalated to the point where we had a prototype up and running."

> ***"In this case Marmalade was the best tool for the job, and it allowed us to get iterating and get refining very quickly."***
>
> Phil Scott, NVIDIA

At around the same time, Scott's day job as NVIDIA developer technology evangelist had lead him to meet Marmalade CTO Tim Closs, and soon the project was underway to bring back *Millennium Soldier* as *Expendable Remarmed*. That process began with a prototype, built using Marmalade, for the Tegra hardware Scott already knew very well.

Scott is quick to point out that a wealth of tools support Tegra, but it was Marmalade that he and his co-developers picked, attracted by its relevance to the original game's coding language and suitability for rapid prototyping.

"What's great about the Tegra hardware is that there's a lot of very, very good tools that really let you dig into it," confirms Scott. "But one of the big benefits of Marmalade here was that it didn't really get in the way of you inspecting things, so that's a huge bonus.

"Marmalade was an excellent tool, and in this case Marmalade felt like it was the best tool for the job, and it allowed us to get iterating and get refining very quickly."

WHAT YOU C IS WHAT YOU GET

As they began their work recreating the game on Android, the Retrobomb team realised that working in native C and C++ was a natural fit to how the original was made. The game used its own scripted language, interpreted by a proprietary engine, and a wealth of unique binary assets and various other elements in industry-standard formats such as TMDs, PCXs and DDSs. To have such knowledge and intimacy with the original game was a blessing, but could have made for a very complicated process otherwise.

"With Marmalade it was actually pretty straightforward," reveals Scott. "We knew our binary language format, we knew the engine and everything like that, so we didn't have to rewrite every nuance of the game again. It worked very well, with the underlying architecture of the game all being in C and C++. We had an OpenGL ES renderer, which Marmalade obviously just gives you straight access to, and then, on top of that, there was this script language that the editor would sort of spit out, which really would make no sense to anybody without prior knowledge.

Then came the decision to target the Tegra 4-powered Shield, which while an ambitious undertaking, was an equally positive experience for Retrobomb.

"It was a natural progression to take the game to Shield," states Scott. "We'd actually already added, through the Marmalade extension process, support for USB joypads for the other Android devices. We worked really hard to make *Expendable Rearmed* work with touch screen, with a lot of focus testing with great results. But we wanted the controller support, and so that took us to the point of having the game already perfect for Shield, which uses all the standard Android API's, such as HID controllers."

The Shield version did require some tweaking to take advantage of the additional rendering power the platform provides to Android developers, but using Marmalade the work was relatively simple.

For now, Retrobomb remains focused on the possibility of taking *Expendable Rearmed* to more devices and platforms, and Marmalade remains focused on letting studios the world over do just that. ■

InnoGames

www.innogames.com

Register by July 18 and **SAVE €130!**

develop readers, register with the code **GDCE13DM** for extra savings!

LEARN. NETWORK. INSPIRE.

GDC 13 EUROPE

CO-LOCATED WITH gamescom

GAME DEVELOPERS CONFERENCE™ EUROPE 2013

COLOGNE, GERMANY | AUGUST 19–21, 2013

EXPO DATES: AUGUST 19–20, 2013

GAME DEVELOPERS CONFERENCE™ EUROPE (GDC EUROPE) IS THE LARGEST PROFESSIONALS-ONLY GAMES INDUSTRY EVENT IN EUROPE. JOIN US AT GDC EUROPE, AUGUST 19-21, 2013, FOR THREE DAYS OF LEARNING LED BY TOP INDUSTRY EXPERTS.

MAIN CONFERENCE SESSIONS

MONDAY–WEDNESDAY

- Business, Marketing & Management
- Design
- Production
- Programming
- Visual Arts

SUMMITS

MONDAY–TUESDAY

- Independent Games
- Smartphone & Tablet Games
- Free to Play Design & Business

EXPO FLOOR

MONDAY & TUESDAY

Explore the latest in game innovations and network with industry experts

VISIT **GDCEUROPE.COM** TO REGISTER

Supported by: European Games Developer Federation, BIU, gamescom, Stadt Köln, UBM Tech

DIRECTORY

The world's premier listing of games development studios, tools, outsourcing specialists, services and courses...

SERVICES SPOTLIGHT: Dimensional Imaging
p72

TOOLS SPOTLIGHT: Umbra Software
p74

TRAINING SPOTLIGHTS: Sheffield Hallam and BCU
p76

KEY CONTACTS

Amiqus	www.amiqus.com
Arm	malideveloper.arm.com
Epic Games	www.epicgames.com
Gamer Camp	www.gamercamp.co.uk
High Score Productions	www.high-score.co.uk
University of Hull	www.hull.ac.uk
Vicon	www.vicon.com

develop DIRECTORY

GREAT ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES

RATES
1/4 page: £450 (or £200/month if booked for a minimum of six months)

Contact:
Alex.Boucher@intentmedia.co.uk

T: 01992 535 647

CREDIT CRUNCH? YEAH! IT'S OVER!

Game-Audio
Dialogue Production
Localisation
Music
Sound Design

But that's still no reason to go mental paying crazy London studio prices for game audio. We pride ourselves in realistic pricing, a professional service and outstanding audio quality, with more than 140 titles completed to date!

"Working with Hugh and the High Score guys ran like clockwork, extremely professional results whilst having a friendly attitude."
Simon Barford, Blitz Games Studios

HighScore productions

www.high-score.co.uk +44 (0) 1295 738337

RECRUITER HOT SEAT

Avalanche Studio's talent acquisition manager **Ju Shim** on what the Just Cause and Mad Max maker can offer you

What differentiates Avalanche from other games studios?
Even though our studios are located in different countries, many areas are the same whether you work in Stockholm or New York. We offer an environment where work-life balance is taken seriously. One way to realise this is to promote sane working hours and offer everyone 25 vacation days from their first day of employment.

You also get to work in a flat organisation where your thoughts and ideas are heard. There are no walled offices or closed doors at Avalanche Studios. Everyone, including our co-founders and managers, are seated in an open-floor plan with plenty of movement to support creative work with ever-changing needs.

With such a flat structure, it's important for us to promote alternative development paths for our employees and give our specialists the same opportunities to grow as our leaders. Avalanche Studios is a privately funded, fully independent studio with low turnover and a high percentage of senior staff. We work with both big licences and self-developed IPs, both on multiformat triple-A games and mobile.

How many staff are you currently looking to take on?
In New York, we are full speed ahead with our projects and currently looking for talented programmers and artists for our triple-A projects. We will also add to our QA and production teams during the coming months. Our target in growth may take us past 80 people at that studio. In Stockholm, we are currently at 160 staff, and are not actively looking to grow at this point. But we are always interested to hear from talented people that may help us to improve further.

What perks or privileges are available staff at the studio?
Our benefits are above and beyond industry standards. We offer an eight-hour work day with limited overtime. In addition, we offer all our employees five weeks of paid vacation time, which includes a two-week summer holiday break when the entire company shuts down.

Then, we come back and share our stories, which brings us closer together and opens our eyes to the diversity of our company. We also offer 100 per cent company paid benefits and present opportunities to our employees to work in both our New York and Stockholm studios.

What should aspiring developers do with their CV to get to an interview?
They should check out our website and apply. They should also write a great cover letter explaining why they want to join us and what talent and experiences they can bring to the Avalanche family. A reel and/or portfolio are also recommended.

Who is the best interviewee you have ever had, and how did they impress you?
The best interview I've had so far at Avalanche Studios was a programmer candidate. He didn't have that much

GET THAT JOB

Development specialists offer advice on how you can bag that career leap

THIS MONTH: **HEAD OF DEVELOPMENT**

"Leading highly-talented and brilliant people is all about giving them the right opportunities to succeed.

"When in charge, get comfortable being uncomfortable. Do not try to control what everyone is doing. I can assure you that they know what they should do better than you.

"Instead, focus on the overall goals and what is really important and let that guide their decisions. Also, make no jobs small, stop delegating tasks and let your people be responsible for entire focus areas or specific initiatives. That's a good start for building efficient, self-organising and accountable teams.

"After all, they are the experts. Treat them like experts, respect them and their work, and magic will follow."

Carl Almgren, Head of Development at Frostbite, DICE

SIX-SECOND STUDIO SPOTLIGHT

- *Failbetter Games* engages players in its titles using text, and gives writers the tools to do the same with its StoryNexus tech
- Failbetter's text-based browser games emphasise player choice and writing quality
- Its biggest game is *Fallen London*, a Gothic fantasia set in an alternate Victorian London which has been dragged underground
- Four full-timers and freelancers, build the games for web
- Its currently working on a new project with book publisher Random House
- "Our CEO is the only one in the company without a beard," says Paul Arendt. "We think the peer pressure is getting to him" **www.fallenlondon.com**

BIO
Name: Ju Shim
Title: Talent Acquisition Manager
Developer: Avalanche Studios
www.avalanchestudios.se

> ***"We have been successful staffing up both our studios with a diverse group of people from all over the world."***
> Ju Shim, Avalanche Studios

work experience, but had a solid education in games. What impressed me the most was that he really did his homework before we spoke. He genuinely had interest in our studio and projects. Through his excitement and passion for our industry and for Avalanche Studios, my own fire was actually fuelled. I want to hire more people just like this enthusiastic programmer. He put a huge smile on my face and I'm sure he could see it even through our phone call.

And who was the worst?
I find the worst interviewees to be those who come across as lacking in passion. They may not know anything about our company or our games, which I think is the minimum a candidate should prepare for any interview with a developer.

What advice would you give jobseekers for a successful interview at Avalanche?
Do your homework on the company and the key leaders. LinkedIn is the professional equivalent to Facebook, so start there. During the interview, be yourself and try to relax. If you really know how to do your job and are confident of your experiences, interviewing should feel natural.

If your studio has recruited talent internationally, what was the process like for your studio and for the applicant?
We welcome talent from all over the world, and as a natural consequence, we deal with a lot of visas and immigration paperwork. For those candidates that are in need of a visa in order to work at either of our studios, I, along with our HR team, ensure that the candidate is literally walked through each step of the visa process as well as guiding them on all matters related to relocation. We have been successful staffing up both our studios with a diverse group of people from all over the world, so we take this aspect of talent acquisition very seriously.

How have your recruitment needs changed today?
Right now we are focused on candidates with console experience, as we are mostly known for developing on console platforms.

However, we are also shifting our focus to other markets such as mobile in order to compete in new markets and to broaden our customer base. So with that in mind, we may also have to focus on hiring talent with well-rounded experience with other platforms as well.

What area of the industry needs more investment?
We need more investment in people. Develop people's skill sets with the right training, education and mentorships as people are the most important investment to any company. With new markets and new business models, employees are feeling the stress and strain of having to keep up in all aspects of development. We simply need to do our part, by investing in their skills, their talents and their wellbeing.

NEW STUDIO ALERT!

LOOKING TO DEMONSTRATE another side to themselves are Jonathan Dixon (*right*) and Steve Ridgway (*left*), founders of **Tint** in Newcastle upon Tyne.

"Having both worked at various agencies over the past few years and feeling what we were developing wasn't a true representation of what we could produce, we felt we needed to 'find the love' for what we do again," Dixon tells us. "With a strong love of gaming, especially in the mobile sector, we decided to form a studio aimed at producing beautifully crafted, fun and exciting mobile games, and hence Tint was born."

Their studio name is an abbreviation of a *Star Wars* quote, "There is no try".

"There's no point in simply thinking and dreaming about trying to achieve something, you just have to do it," emphasises a proactive feeling Dixon.

Currently just the two of them working to produce an iOS and Windows Phone game; Dixon handles development and Ridgway the design. Complementary skills in both areas mean they can "operate with the talent and skills between the two of us," Dixon adds.

"Our main aim at Tint is to create the best possible end product. We're doing this for the love of what we do, and we hope it shows in what we produce."
www.tintdigital.co.uk

MOVERS AND SHAKERS

This month: Supercell, Jagex, Marmalade and the V&A

SUPERCELL Former EA EVP of digital **KRISTIAN SEGERSTRALE** has joined the board of directors at *Clash of Clans* developer Supercell.

Segerstrale, who has formed studios such as Glu Mobile and Playfish, was previously part of the Initial Capital team that invested in the mobile and tablet gaming outfit in 2010.

Supercell CEO Ilkka Paananen said the industry veteran would bring a valuable and relevant set of experiences to help with its long-term decision making and help build on the company's success with *Hay Day* and *Clash of Clans*.

"Very few individuals move as seamlessly between start-ups and large scale public companies as Kristian, and I would be hard pressed to find someone with a more valuable and relevant set of experiences to help us in our decision making as we navigate the challenges that lie ahead," said Paananen.

"However, at Supercell we never focus on experience alone, and what really struck a chord with us was Kristian's focus on talent and building winning company cultures throughout all his ventures – values that we cherish at Supercell.

"He also shares our passion to build a successful company for the coming decades and our focus on long term decision making accordingly. That and the fact that our house band really needed a keyboard player."

JAGEX Jagex has appointed its chief financial officer **RIAAN HODGSON** as its new chief operating officer.

Hodgson, who will retain his responsibilities as CFO alongside his new position, will now oversee business development, operations and commercial delivery for the studio.

He will also supervise all operational aspects of service provision for the *RuneScape* developer's current and future titles.

"I'm thrilled to be taking on the role of COO at such an exciting time for the studio," said Hodgson.

"Jagex stands on the forefront of browser gaming and I hope that I will be able to continue to help Jagex retain its industry leading position in my new role. This year is going to be a massive year for Jagex with the upcoming releases of both *RuneScape 3* and *Transformers Universe* and I am delighted to be able to play a part in making that happen. It has been an incredible journey over the last five years and I am hugely excited about what the future holds."

Jagex CEO Mark Gerhard added: "Riaan has played a central role in our success over the past five years and his deep routed understanding of Jagex, business and games places him in the perfect position to oversee the operations of the studio."

MARMALADE Marmalade has hired two senior staff for its in-house games studio. **MIKE WILLIS** (*left*) has joined Marmalade Game Studio as head of programming, **GREG HOUNSOM** (*right*) joins as a senior producer.

"I'm looking forward to making a difference here at Marmalade, and using the experience I've built up over the last 17 years to make some awesome cross-platform games," said Willis.

Mike's career in the games industry spans 17 years at EA and Playfish, where he worked on six *Harry Potter* games and, recently, *The Sims Social*.

Hounsom's new role will see him overseeing the production of Marmalade's game development group from a management, budget, schedule and quality perspective. He has over 15 years industry experience, working for companies including Eidos, Sony and Endemol Games.

"I am very excited to be here at Marmalade and to build upon their industry-leading mobile technology and tools. Marmalade Game Studio has just the right mix of specialists and up-and-coming talent," said Hounsom.

Michael Burnham, studio head at Marmalade, added: "Mike and Greg join us at a very exciting time for Marmalade Game Studio, as we continue work on a major project, which unites a variety of well-known IPs. Their expertise in producing first-rate games will be invaluable for us in the coming months."

V&A Swallowtail chair and BAFTA Ones to Watch winner **SOPHIA GEORGE** has been appointed as the Victoria & Albert museum's first ever games designer in residence.

George's residency will begin from October 2013 for six months.

As part of the residency, the Swallowtail dev plans to run a project with a group of students from a girls' school to help promote game design.

"To be appointed as the first ever V&A game designer in residence is a dream come true and an incredible recognition of everything I've worked so hard for," said George.

V&A residency coordinator Ruth Lloyd added: "We are delighted that Sophia has been selected. We think this will let game designers know that the V&A are seriously interested in their craft and in engaging the new public in this important industry."

Services & Tech Recruiter Hot Seat

Atomhawk director **Cumron Ashtiani** discusses what his art and design firm offer studios, and how you can join its team

What makes Atomhawk different from other design companies?
Many of the outsource art and design companies working in the games industry are centred around Asia and India, and are geared towards providing a low-cost art resources.

Atomhawk is very different as we are more of a stand-alone design studio. We work in games, film, TV and digital media, and provide top-tier creative materials in the form of concept art, marketing assets, video production and UI/UX design. We have a crack team of exceptionally talented artists and designers based in our UK studio and work with some incredible clients.

We're geared towards solving creative problems and providing top-tier expertise and skills that are hard to hire-in.

What benefits do you offer staff?
A chance to work on some of the biggest brands in the world, across triple-A games, Hollywood movies and innovative digital platforms. To help staff do this we offer competitive salaries, bonuses and an employer-contributed pension scheme.

What disciplines are you in need of?
We always need awesome concept artists and UI designers. We're especially looking for a senior concept artist, a junior UI designer and an intermediate UI designer, but all applicants are considered if their portfolio is strong enough.

How have your needs changed?
The key skills needed within our team has stayed consistent since we founded in 2009. However, the company has grown significantly over the last four years and, so, with a larger team, we are able to support more specialist roles such as environment specialists, character specialists and so on.

Why should perspective employees choose a career in art services?
A career at Atomhawk enables talented individuals to get the best of every creative industry. A diverse range of creative projects spanning a number of mediums, an expert team to learn from and also a stable job as, unlike development studios, we don't have all our finances invested in one or two projects.

What opportunities are there for career progression?
Atomhawk is growing, we're now at 21 staff – having started with just four of us – and we could grow faster, but we believe in hiring the right people, and so we are careful to take our time and seek out talented individuals that share our values.
www.atomhawk.com

Aeria Games

Berlin, Germany
www.aeriagames.com

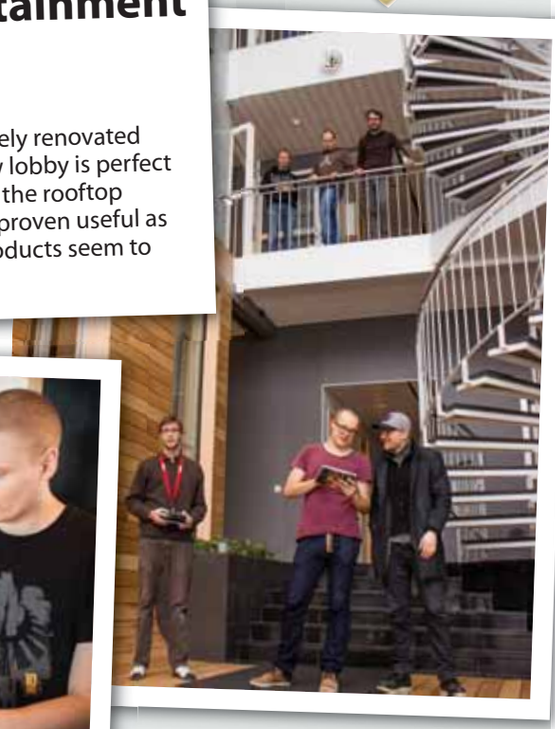
Aeria Games' Berlin office is part cavernous art studio, part spa centre: from deep, swayed leather armchairs in its lounge to the continental styling of its kitchenette.

THIS IS **WHERE WE WORK**

Remedy Entertainment

Espoo, Finland
www.remedygames.com

Remedy moved to a completely renovated office earlier this year. Its new lobby is perfect for flying RC helicopters, and the rooftop sauna lounge with a bar has proven useful as well: Remedy Brew Club's products seem to get tastier by the bottle.



SERVICES SPOTLIGHT

This month: **Dimensional Imaging**

DIMENSIONAL IMAGING WAS founded as a spin-off from the University of Glasgow and the University of Edinburgh in 2003 by Colin Urquhart and Douglas Green.

The company was originally called Virtual Clones and its aim was to provide high fidelity stereophotogrammetry-based 3D surface capture to the entertainment industry. It latest innovation, a 4D capture system, has started to generate significant interest from games developers in the last two years.

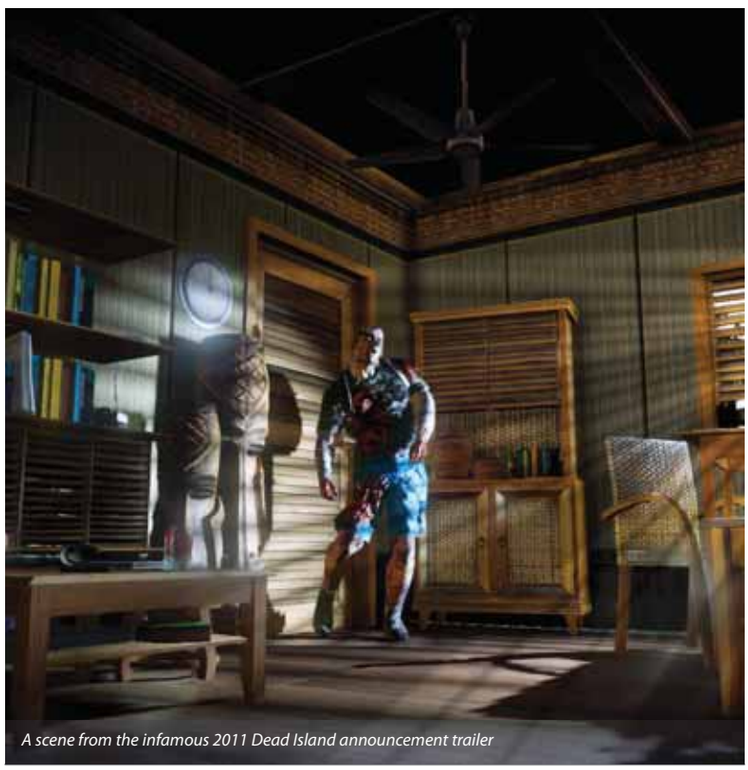
"Improving the realism of facial animation without blowing the whole budget is a big focus for many developers, especially with the impending release of next-gen consoles," CEO Colin Urquhart (*far right*) tells us. "Using Dimensional Imaging's advanced facial performance capture technique is becoming an increasingly attractive option, because it allows very high fidelity facial animation to be captured directly without a prohibitive amount of manual intervention."

Facial capture traditionally splits into either facial performance capture or facial 3D scanning. Dimensional Imaging's 4D surface capture solution effectively combines both by capturing dense 3D 'scan' data at 50 or 60 fps. This means that facial performance can be captured with much higher fidelity than with traditional facial performance capture approaches. It also means that expressions can be captured more effectively than with traditional static 3D scanning approaches.

In the past, Dimensional Imaging has worked on projects including *Left 4 Dead 2* and the now-famous *Dead Island* announcement trailer. It's most recent high profile project was *Halo 4: Spartan Ops*. It provided 4D facial capture data to Axis Animation for several of the main characters.

It has also worked on its first television project, providing facial performance capture for the Euchdag character in *Merlin*, and, further to this, it recently finished shooting for its first movie project which is likely to be released in 2014.

"Dimensional Imaging's 4D capture service offers developers a very convenient method to access the DI4D technology, without having to make the financial and resource commitment



A scene from the infamous 2011 Dead Island announcement trailer

Amiqus 01925 839700 www.amiqus.com

Discover a **global network of talent** today...

Amiqus provide specialist recruitment solutions for the Games Industry.

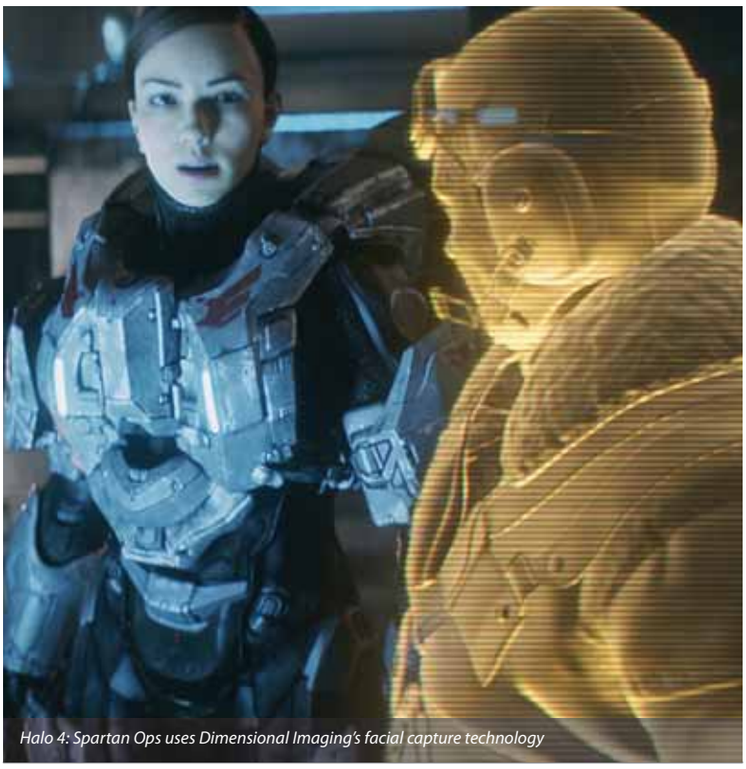
Call 01925 839 700 or visit amiqus.com

amiqus recruitment specialists for the games industry

Arm www.malideveloper.arm.com

Dimensional Imaging
1 Ainslie Road
Glasgow
G52 4RU
United Kingdom

T: +44 141 585 6481
E: info@di3d.com
W: www.di3d.com



Halo 4: Spartan Ops uses Dimensional Imaging's facial capture technology

of purchasing and operating a system themselves. We can, and normally do, capture on-location, which means we can capture the talent when and where they are available, for example during a motion capture shoot or ADR session, and we process the data ourselves, which means the client gets the best possible results from the technology," explains Urquhart.

> ***"Improving the realism of facial animation without blowing the whole budget is a big focus for devs."***
>
> Colin Urquhart, Dimensional Imaging

Looking ahead, DI will be approaching new frontiers with its facial capture tech.

"We expect that head mounted capture systems that are compatible with our solution will become available in the near future, allowing capture of body and high fidelity facial performance simultaneously from multiple actors. We will also continue to push the limit on the detail and subtlety of performance that can be captured so that we are indeed continuing to get closer and closer to crossing the uncanny valley."

Epic **+1 919 870 1516** **www.epicgames.com**

Gamer Camp Studios **www.gamercamp.co.uk**

GAMER CAMP Studios
Latest Tech Skills Training
GAME MAKING
Career Preparation
Professional Coaching Real Experience
INDUSTRY ENDORSED
Only Gamer Camp Studios has industry backing to arm you with the skills you need.
Get specialist skills training, mentoring and support from leading game developers.
Design and build a working game that can be published.
Stand head and shoulders above other graduates!
APPLY NOW
MA/MSc qualifications available for coders, artists and producers
WWW.GAMERCAMP.CO.UK
codemasters
BlitzGamesStudios

TOOLS SPOTLIGHT

This month: **Umbra Software**

UMBRA SOFTWARE WANTS to solve the complicated problem of visibility in 3D graphics. Umbra was started in 2007 by chief technology officer Otso Mäkinen. Its history lies in the legendary Finnish 3D engine outfit Hybrid that was bought by Nvidia and then splintered off from that.

Umbra 3 is the third version of the company's acclaimed visibility solution. In technical terms what it does is occlusion culling – making sure you do not render objects that are hidden behind other objects.

"It sounds simple, but it is a very complex issue to solve efficiently," says Umbra's director of developer relations Thomas Puha (*far right*). "Traditionally, the solving part requires a lot of manual work from artists and we automate that as much as possible so that artists can concentrate on making graphics look better instead of having to do a lot of painstaking portal-work. The end result is smoother running games that look better on-screen."

Umbra has been in used in games such as *Guild Wars 2*, *Alan Wake*, *Mass Effect 2* and *3* as well as Splash Damage's *Dirty Bomb*.

Its latest update is 3.3. Much time was spent optimising for next generation consoles, such as the PS4. Many optimisations that have been done make things run a lot faster and significantly reduce draw calls, which will be important in next-gen games. The main

> ***"We've got tremendous experience in occlusion culling, 3D engines and graphics programming, which gives us a lot of expertise that we leverage."***
>
> Thomas Puha, Umbra Software

new feature in 3.3 is 'dynamic occluders', which allows developers to use any type of dynamic element, for example boss characters or large moving vehicles, as occluders. Puha says static objects tend

Fantasy MMO Guild Wars 2 uses Umbra's tech

High Score Productions +44 (0) 129 573 8337 www.high-score.co.uk

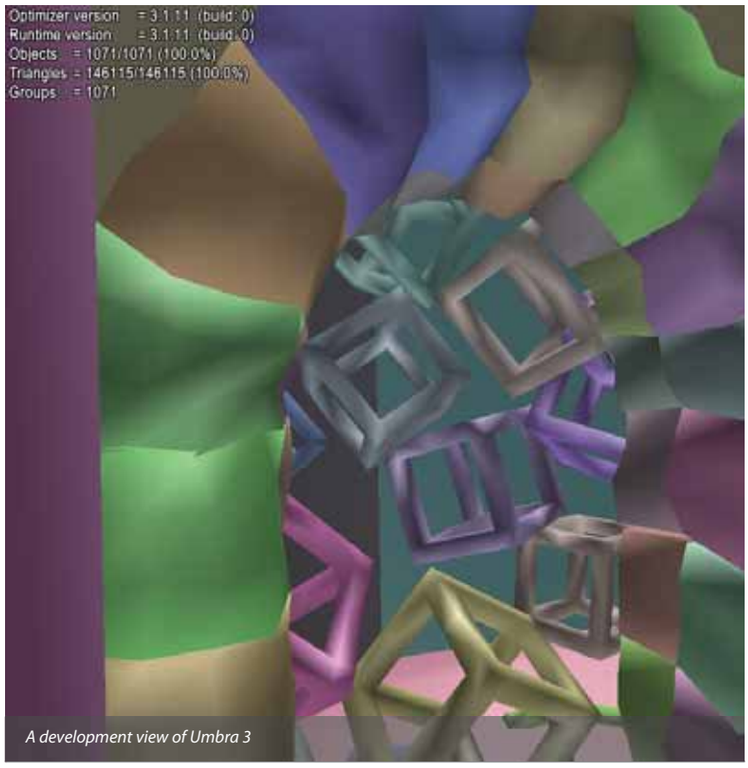
CREDIT CRUNCH? YEAH! IT'S OVER!
Game-Audio
Dialogue Production
Localisation
Music
Sound Design
But that's still no reason to go mental paying crazy London studio prices for game audio. We pride ourselves in realistic pricing, a professional service and outstanding audio quality, with more than 140 titles completed to date!
"Working with Hugh and the High Score guys ran like clockwork, extremely professional results whilst having a friendly attitude."
Simon Barford, Blitz Games Studios
HighScore productions
www.high-score.co.uk +44 (0) 1295 738337

University of Hull +44 (0) 1482 465951 www.mscdegrees.com

Games Education with a Reputation
UNIVERSITY OF Hull
18 years of educating video game professionals
MSc Games Programming
BSc Computer Science with Games Development
MEng Computer Science with Games Development
MOST WANTED
"The University of Hull consistently provides Criterion Games with high quality game programming graduates. Our 2012 intake, from Hull, were instrumental in building out several of the features in Need for Speed Most Wanted" Paul Ross, CTO, Criterion Games
commercially relevant leading edge professional software development
BCS Educational Affiliate
www.hull.ac.uk/dcs
skillset

Umbra Software
Eerikinkatu 27
00180 Helsinki
Finland

T: +358 20 773 8440
E: info@umbrasoftware.com
W: www.umbrasoftware.com


Optimizer version = 3.1.11 (build: 0)
Runtime version = 3.1.11 (build: 0)
Objects = 1071/1071 (100.0%)
Triangles = 146115/146115 (100.0%)
Groups = 1071
A development view of Umbra 3

to make for the best occluders, but with next-gen worlds becoming more dynamic, he believes this feature meets the needs of users and helps with user-generated content and destructible worlds. The best results occur when Umbra is taken into the development cycle early on, he adds.

And Umbra hasn't forgotten about the current generation consoles either. Its worked on lessening the memory that Umbra 3 uses, which will be important for games such as *Destiny*, which is also coming to PS3 and 360.

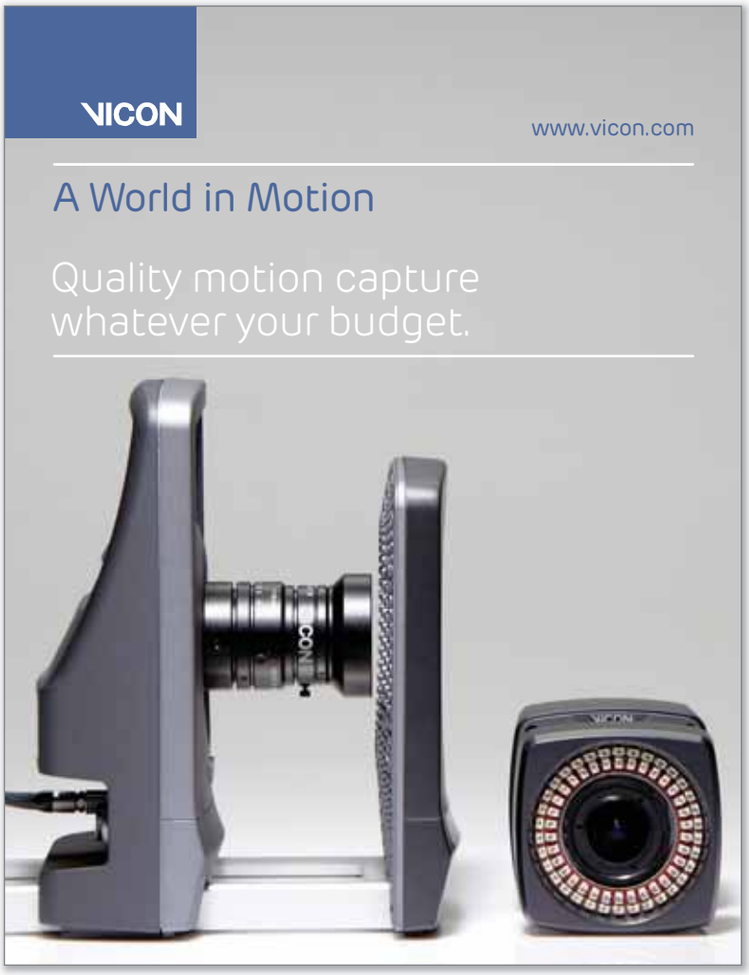
Furthermore, it's the provider of the occlusion culling technology used in Unity, and is also part of Epic's Intergrated Partners Program for UE4.

And the near future is looking exciting for the outfit. In addition to Bungie's *Destiny*, Umbra 3's currently being used to build CD Projekt Red's *The Witcher 3*, an unannounced project from Eidos Montreal, Square Enix is using it, as is Remedy's *Quantum Break* for Xbox One and more.

"We've got tremendous experience in occlusion culling, 3D engines and graphics programming in general, which gives us a lot of expertise that we leverage into our product. We work with some of the world's best video game development studios on a daily basis that really help us to make our product as good as it can be," says Puha.

"There isn't a lot of competition out there – companies doing occlusion culling middleware that we do – so we compete with development teams engineering resources and development budgets really."

Vicon **www.vicon.com**



www.develop-online.net

TRAINING SPOTLIGHTS

This month: **Sheffield Hallam University (Steel Minions Studio)**

SHEFFIELD HALLAM UNIVERSITY can claim to be the first UK university to publish its own PlayStation Minis game. Establishing a commercially-licenced game studio, Steel Minions, students at the university produced and released *Bounceback*, which won three out of four of the top awards at the regional Game Republic student showcase competition in 2012.

The three Games Software Development degrees offered at Sheffield Hallam University (BSc, MComp and MSc), are all Skillset-accredited courses aimed at technical programming roles in the games industry. There are currently less than a dozen accredited technical courses in the UK and three of them are at Sheffield Hallam. The institute is also one of a select number of universities that are part of the PlayStation First academic partnership programme, which gives it access to industry-standard PlayStation hardware and software for teaching.

Technical courses accredited by Skillset have to demonstrate that they include appropriate levels of C++ programming, mathematics, hardware architectures and inter-disciplinary teamwork in order to gain accreditation. SHU courses focus on C++ in all years, include two years of degree-level mathematics, and teach assembly programming on various architectures, including the PlayStation 3.

"The course content is both technical and challenging, but the Skillset accreditation means that it has been independently assessed by professionals as having the correct balance of content to equip our graduates for employment in the games industry," says Dr Jake Habgood, senior lecturer for software and games development.

SHU has some 37 PS3 dev kits, seven Vita dev kits and six PSP dev kits, all with access to Sony's PhyreEngine (used to make the BAFTA award-winning *Journey*) and the associated SN Systems toolchains.

> ***"The course covers the content required to gain employment as a programmer in the industry."***
>
> Jake Habgood, Sheffield Hallam University

The course has strong links with Sumo Digital, SCEE and Sheffield indie games developers, who run regular show-and-tell sessions in a local pub. Alumni from the course have gone on to work at SN Systems, Team 17, Distinctive Developments, Team Cooper, Red Kite Games, Blast Furnace, Barcrest and Fish in a Bottle.

Habgood explains that in the future he hopes to publish more games for Sony's platforms.

"We've just bought some new Vita dev kits and we'll certainly be making good use of them next year," he says. "I cut my industry teeth on the original PlayStation console so I will always have a soft spot for Sony's hardware. It was the passion for development I gained making games like *Hogs of War* for the PlayStation that still make me misty-eyed about the industry."

Summing up, Habgood says SHU has "an appropriately hard course which covers the content required to gain employment as a programmer in the games industry, and we have the industry contacts to get talent noticed".

Sheffield Hallam University (Steel Minions Studio)
Cantor Building
153 Arundel Street
Sheffield
S1 2NU
United Kingdom

T: +44 7754 843492
E: studio@steelminions.com
W: www.steelminions.com

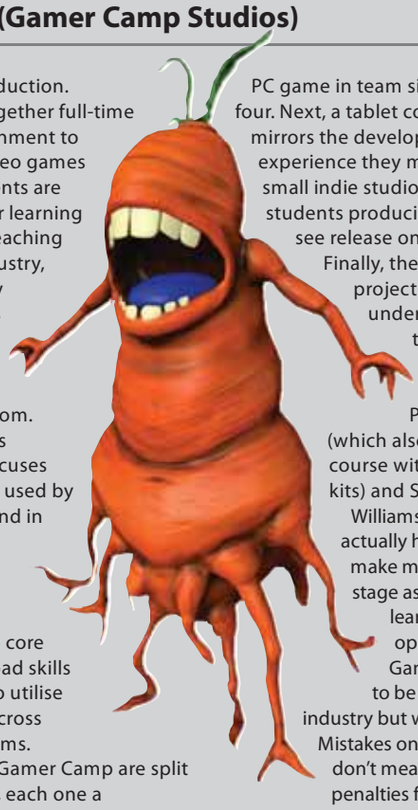
This month: **Birmingham City University (Gamer Camp Studios)**

HIGHER EDUCATION COURSES are supposed to bring students within reach of their games development dreams. But that's not always the case.

Conscious that some games companies feel that not enough students are being realistically prepared for life in the industry, Birmingham City University has adopted a vocational approach with its Gamer Camp studio.

"I see Gamer Camp more like your first year in the video games industry and less like a year on a degree course, that's what attracted me to joining the staff team here," says Iain Harrison, art director and senior lecturer on MA Video Game Development at Gamer Camp Studios. "The Gamer Camp course differs from traditional degree courses in that we focus heavily on work-based learning, with the prerequisite skills for a project being taught in sessions at the beginning of each dev cycle. We then allow the students to use these skills in 'real' situations, by running a mock games studio environment."

The team was assembled by Oliver Williams, the Gamer Camp studio director who had the vision to take a new approach to games education. Gamer Camp hosts three specialising in code, art and production. Students work together full-time in a studio environment to develop three video games in one year. Students are supported in their learning by experienced teaching staff from the industry, who've previously worked at studios such as Codemasters, EA, Free Radical Design and Eurocom.



Harrison says its teaching ethos focuses on 'T skills', a term used by Creative Skillset and in Valve's staff handbook to describe students that are highly specialised in one core field, but with broad skills and knowledge to utilise their specialism across teams and platforms.

The courses at Gamer Camp are split into three phases, each one a development project aimed at a different platform. The first project eases the students in by starting with a PC game in team sizes of three or four. Next, a tablet computer project mirrors the development experience they might have in a small indie studio, with the students producing games that see release on app stores.

Finally, the last and longest project sees student undertaking a full triple-A project for PS3, with assistance from PlayStation First (which also provided the course with its 11 PS3 dev kits) and SCEE as the client.

Williams says: "It can actually help if students make mistakes at this stage as it provides great learning opportunities. Gamer Camp is set up to be your first year in industry but with a safety net. Mistakes on Gamer Camp don't mean financial penalties from publishers for a late milestone delivery or a trip to HR for a written warning. In our studio the students are encouraged to reflect and learn from their mistakes making them better professionals in the long run."

Alumni from Gamer Camp has now work at Sega, Crytek, Travellers Tales, Feral Interactive and Playground Games. This year, one of its students has already joined Evolution Studios, while another has acquired significant funding to set up a new studio in Rome.

The course leaders are currently looking to extend their offering to include an undergraduate course.

"At Gamer Camp Studios we believe the best way to learn the skills needed to make games is to make games," concludes Williams. "It isn't just a course; it's real game development, in a real studio with experienced veterans from industry as your mentors."

Birmingham City University (Gamer Camp Studios)
The New Technology Institute
15 Bartholomew Row
Birmingham
B5 5JU
United Kingdom

T: +44 121 212 4818
E: iain.harrison@bcu.ac.uk
W: www.bcu.ac.uk/gamercamp

Sumo Digital's Sean Millard (second from left) with the Steel Minions team and their PSP dev kit

SCEE's Maria Stukoff (right) at the 2012 Games Britannia launch in Sheffield

Course leaders Iain Harrison (left) and Oliver Williams (right)

Gamer Camp students working on a PS3 dev kit

develop FORWARD PLANNER

AUGUST 2013

BUILD SPECIAL FEATURE: WORKFLOW AND PIPELINES
An in-depth look at the ways pipelines are changing, and the technology that links your tools

REGION FOCUS: EMERGING MARKETS SPECIAL

EVENTS:
GDC Europe, Cologne – August 19th to 21st
Gamescom, Cologne – August 21th to 25th

SEPTEMBER 2013

USER INTERFACES AND USER INTERACTION
Touch screens and gesture inputs have changed how gamers interact. But how have they changed how games are made?

BUILD SPECIAL FEATURE: GRAPHICS AND RENDERING
An update on the tools and applications for cutting edge graphics and on-screen beauty

REGION FOCUS: MIDLANDS, UK

EVENTS:
Develop Quiz, London – September 18th

OCTOBER 2013

CONTRACTING SPECIAL
How flexible workforces can ease your production woes – and advice on becoming a contractor

BUILD SPECIAL FEATURE: APPS & MOBILE GAMES DEV TECH
An investigation into the tools that underpin the increasingly important smartphone games space

REGION FOCUS: FRANKFURT

NOVEMBER 2013

START YOUR OWN STUDIO SPECIAL
Setting up on your own? We can help out with a range of features written by experts in business, finance, law and development

WORKSTATIONS AND HARDWARE
What's the best workstation for your studio? Will an overclocked PC serve you better? The experts answer the key questions

BUILD SPECIAL FEATURE: CHARACTER ANIMATION
This head-to-toe guide examines what's new in the technologies that make games characters walk, run and save the world

REGION FOCUS: NORDIC

EVENTS:
London Games Conference, London – November 13th

EDITORIAL enquiries should go through to Will.Freeman@intentmedia.co.uk, or call him on 01992 535646

To discuss **ADVERTISING** contact Alex.Boucher@intentmedia.co.uk, or call him on 01992 535647

Follow Develop on Twitter: **@developonline** or on Facebook: **facebook.com/developonline**

amiqus
recruitment specialists
for the games industry

THE FAQ PAGE: JASON AVENT

Develop grills respected figures from the global games industry

Jason Avent previously worked at Black Rock Studios in Brighton, before leading Boss Alien to triumphant heights with CSR Racing in 2012

Who are you and what do you do?
I'm Jason Avent and I founded Boss Alien with a group of friends from Brighton and my best friend, Tim Swan in June 2011. NaturalMotion Games acquired the studio in July 2012 and now I'm the VP and studio head. We make games for mobile devices with compelling gameplay and high-end production values.

What are you working on right now?
CSR Racing has a full development team on it to generate events, support our player base and we're working on a set of big features for a new release on the title soon. We have new, unannounced games in the works that will push the capabilities of the latest mobile hardware and really show off what they can do.

What was the first video game or product that you ever worked on in the industry?
I worked at Microprose on *XCom Terror from the Deep*.

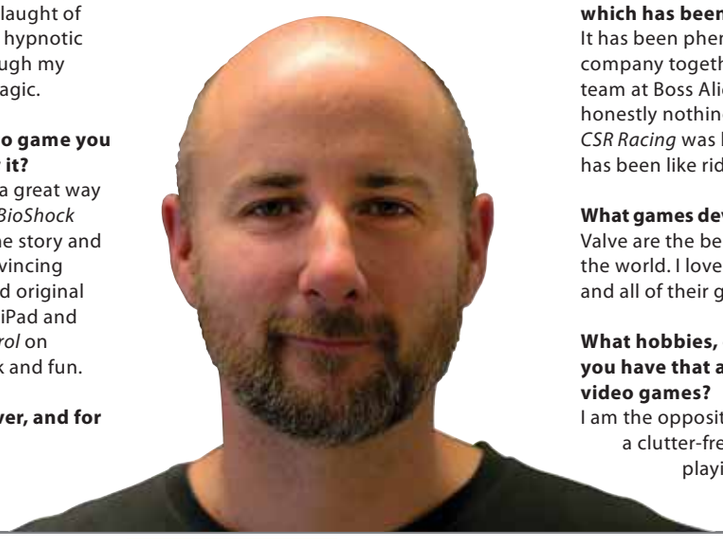
What was the first video game you ever played, and did you enjoy it?
The first I remember was *Space Invaders* in the arcades and I loved it. That booming metronome of the relentless onslaught of pixelated white space aliens was hypnotic and I remember it vibrating through my bones as a kid with an electric magic.

What was the most recent video game you ever played, and did you enjoy it?
I'm playing *Rocksmith* – which is a great way to get better at guitar. I finished *BioShock Infinite* a few weeks ago, loved the story and the amazingly beautiful and convincing world. What an amazing vivid and original fantasy. I'm playing *Minecraft* on iPad and *Running with Friends* and *Ace Patrol* on mobile. All of which are very slick and fun.

What is your favourite game ever, and for what reason?
I have lots of favourites. At least one per generation. This console generation it was *Call of Duty 4*. I played *League of Legends* for about 18 months and lost a year to *Planetside*. *Ocarina of Time*, *Metal Gear Solid*, *Forza*, *Micro Machines*, *Quake II*, *Battlefield 1942*, *Counter-Strike*, *Half-Life 2* and a great many more. The game of my childhood was *Elite*.

How many hours a week do you spend playing video games?
I have two young children now so the days of spending an entire weekend playing games are gone. I once spent about 48 hours from Friday afternoon through to Monday morning playing the original *Command & Conquer* until I'd close my eyes and see the little dudes buzzing around on my retinas. Now I get two-to-three hours per day most days to play games. Occasionally, I'll take the day off to play a big release in one go.

What area of the industry needs more 'investment' in your view?
There are some brilliant innovators here in the UK and it'd be great to see some of those new studios get the financial support they need. NaturalMotion is a modern UK-based developer-publisher and it's great to be part of an ongoing success story that's home grown. It's a shining example of where innovation and investment has worked well.



What do you enjoy about the video games industry today?
I love the fact that there are so many ways to create, access and consume games now. It means that games I have access to are more diverse than ever. Recently, I was playing *Hotline Miami*, *FTL*, *Far Cry 3*, *Clash of Clans* and *Year Walk* at about the same time. All are very different games. A few years ago it would have been a load of first- and third-person action games on console that were kind of homogeneous.

What disappoints you about the video games industry today?
I'm disappointed by the negative attitude toward change shown by some consumers and publishers. I'm frustrated by the tribal thinking that makes people conservative and almost religious in their views about how gaming should be.

Of all the games you have worked on, which has been your favourite to work on?
It has been phenomenally exciting to put a company together and we have an amazing team at Boss Alien. The atmosphere is honestly nothing short of magical. Making *CSR Racing* was brilliant fun and the success has been like riding on a rocket ship.

What games developer do you most admire?
Valve are the best video games company in the world. I love their working philosophy and all of their games.

What hobbies, collections or interests do you have that are completely unrelated to video games?
I am the opposite of a collector and strive for a clutter-free life. However, I do like cars, playing guitar and mountain biking in my spare time.

amiqus Discover a global network of talent today at **amiqus.com**

develop
THE INTERNATIONAL MONTHLY FOR GAMES PROGRAMMERS, ARTISTS, MUSICIANS AND PRODUCERS

Editor-in-Chief
Michael French
michael.french@intentmedia.co.uk

Staff Writer
Aaron Lee
aaron.lee@intentmedia.co.uk

Design
Sam Richwood
sam.richwood@intentmedia.co.uk

Editor
Will Freeman
will.freeman@intentmedia.co.uk

Sales Manager
Alex Boucher
alex.boucher@intentmedia.co.uk

Publisher
Stuart Dinsey
stuart.dinsey@intentmedia.co.uk

Staff Writer
Craig Chapple
craig.chapple@intentmedia.co.uk

Production Manager
Kelly Jones
kelly.jones@intentmedia.co.uk

Managing Editor
Lisa Carter
lisa.carter@intentmedia.co.uk

Contributors
John Broomhall, Nick Gibson, Will Luton, Jan Werkmeister, Alex Wright-Manning

intentmedia
Intent Media is a member of the Periodical Publishers Associations

CIRCULATION IS OVER 8,000
ISSN: 1365-7240

Tel: 01992 535646 **Fax:** 01992 535648 **Web:**www.develop-online.net

© Intent Media 2013 All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or any information storage or retrieval system without the express prior written consent of the publisher. The contents of Develop are subject to reproduction in information storage and retrieval systems. Printed by The Manson Group, AL3 6PZ

Subscription UK: £35 Europe: £50 Rest of World: £70
Enquiries, please email: dev.subscriptions@c-cms.com Tel: 01580 883 848

Charges cover 11 issues and 1st class postage or airmail dispatch for overseas subscribers

Develop is published 11 times a year, reaching 8,000 readers throughout the UK and international market

Testronic

Our assurance is your guarantee

We understand what it takes to launch a great game and we appreciate the pressures you face going to market. Testronic is committed to offering an innovative and evolutionary range of services specifically designed to meet the requirements of our rapidly evolving industry.

Our offerings span all major platforms and devices; from compliance standards for major consoles, to testing online platforms, social and casual games or MMOs, our bespoke services guarantee your assurance.

Whatever your requirement, Testronic can offer the experience and experts to meet your expectations... and then exceed them.

- **QA Localisation**
- **User Experience**
- **Compatibility**
- **Functionality**
- **Compliance**

www.testroniclabs.com | Tel: +44 (0) 2070 421 700 | becky.walker@testroniclabs.com

US – Burbank
111 North First Street
3rd Floor
Burbank, CA 91502
Tel: +1 (818) 845 3223

UK – London
Lyon House
160-166 Borough High Street
London SE1 1LB
Tel: +44 (0) 2070 421 700

Poland – Warsaw
ul. Julianowska 65 A
Piaseczno 05-500
Tel: +48 22 711 4005

Belgium – Diepenbeek
Wetenschapspark 7
B-3590 Diepenbeek
Tel: +32 11 303 600

Japan – Tokyo
c/o Interarrows Inc.
503 Mirum Shiroganedai
1-1-4 Kamiosaki Shinagawa-ku
Tokyo 141-0021
Tel: +81 (0)3 5420 3035

www.testroniclabs.com

Our assurance is your guarantee.

Testronic
Games